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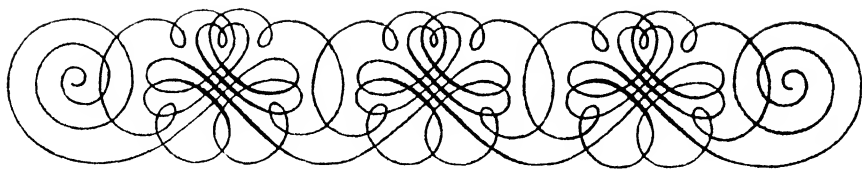


*The Letters of Mary W. Shelley*

VOLUME I





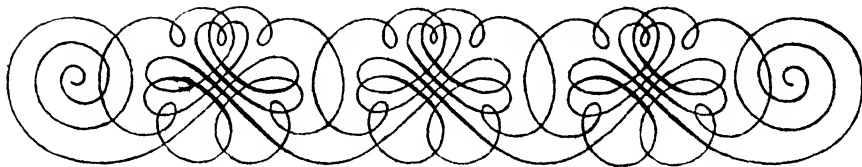


THE LETTERS OF  
*Mary W. Shelley*

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY  
FREDERICK L. JONES

VOLUME I

UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA PRESS  
NORMAN MCMXLIV



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## *Preface*

All the available correspondence of Mary Shelley is collected in these volumes. Approximately half of it has never been printed before. Many other letters are known to exist, and in some instances just what they are is known. Information about these unavailable letters will be found either in the text or in Appendix I. If every scrap of the correspondence still lurking in family archives and in private collections were accessible, it is extremely doubtful that publication of the whole would be practical. The most valuable letters, those written in Shelley's lifetime, are probably about as complete in number as they are likely ever to be.

*The Text.* Whenever possible, the text has been taken from the original letters or photostats of them. If someone other than the editor has made the copy, proper credit (and responsibility) is given to that person. The original text is reproduced exactly in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing. There are doubtless many errors resulting from misreading the manuscript, or failure to record what was clearly seen, or misinterpretation of what seems plain enough. For example, whether Mary intended a capital or a small letter is often a debatable matter. But it can be said without boast that the texts, on the whole, are a great improvement over earlier printed texts, both in correctness and completeness. On extremely rare occasions the punctuation has been supplemented or altered; so rarely, however, that the punctuation may safely be regarded as that of the original letters. The one exception to the faithful reproduction of the original text is that in many instances the place and date have been brought from the end to the head of the letter. Whenever this transfer has been made, an asterisk gives notice of the change. It may be added that Mary's handwriting is usually neat and readable. In her last years, when she often suffered from nervous ailments, it is occasionally less legible. With regard to the irregular, often meaningless punctuation, it is worth observing that in the few formal letters addressed to persons whom Mary did not know (for example, No. 146 to John Parke), the punctuation is regular. This shows us not merely that Mary could punctuate properly when she wished, but that, even among the well-educated, willful punctuation can be expected in personal letters.

*Postmarks.* The postmarks have been recorded whenever they are legible. If all of them are illegible, no notice of any kind is taken of them. In some cases where there are many postmarks, only a select number of them have been reproduced. Only in rare instances were date-postmarks affixed in Italy to letters sent from that country. The date-postmarks on those letters are, with a few exceptions, English. Since two weeks was the usual time it took a letter to pass from Italy to England, the postmark therefore indicates an earlier date of composition. Failure to recognize the provenance of a postmark has more than once, in the past, resulted in the serious misdating of a letter.

*Dates.* More than half of Mary's letters have either no date at all or only part of a date. The editor has spent incalculable hours in attempting to supply these missing dates. Complete success has not always been possible, and a question mark should probably have been affixed to many dates that appear to have been ascertained definitely. However, though there is no room for complacency, the editor is certain that he has corrected many dates erroneously assigned to the letters by previous editors—dates that have frequently been printed as if they were a part of the manuscript. In only a few instances have the variations in dates between this and earlier editions been noted.

*Bibliographical Note.* The note after each letter gives the following information whenever it exists and is available: the *Address*, *Postmarks*, present owner and description of the *Original* letter, and the endorsement if it is *Endorsed*; references, if the letter has been *Printed* previously, otherwise the notation is *Unprinted and Unpublished*; and the source of the *Text* in this edition.

*Notes.* The annotations are frequent and full, because this edition is intended for useful reference.

*The Letters Previously Printed.* A full record of its earlier appearances in print follows each letter. An explanation of this part of the bibliographical note appended to each letter, together with a list of the chief books and periodicals in which the letters have appeared and a note about the abbreviations used, will be found immediately after the list of letters.

*The Original MSS.* Mary's letters are widely scattered, but the majority of them are in a few public and private libraries. The Henry E. Huntington Library has 182, most of which are addressed to Claire Clairmont, the Hunts, and John Howard Payne. Sir John C. E. Shelley-Rolls has 118, including the Whitton MSS (to Whitton, Gregson, and Sir Timothy Shelley), and many letters to Shelley, the Hunts, the Gisbornes, Trelawny, and others. The Bodleian Library has 94, which are mostly to Shelley, the Gisbornes, and the Hunts. Sir John Murray has 44, most of them to Byron and John Murray. The British Museum has 37 (including 14 in the Ashley Library of the late Mr. Thomas J. Wise). Captain R.J.J. Hogg has 23, all of them to T. J. Hogg. The New York Public Library has 19, all except one in the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection; most of them are to Thomas Hookham and Edward Moxon. Also in the Berg Collection are copies of 40 letters in Claire Clairmont's hand-

writing; the originals of 38 of these are in the Huntington Library. Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer has an indeterminate but considerable number of letters. The following libraries and persons have five letters or more: the Luther A. Brewer Collection, University of Iowa (11); the Miriam E. Stark Collection, University of Texas (8); the Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome (8); the late Mr. Alexander Hay (7); the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (6); Lord Abinger (number unknown). Many other libraries and individuals have one or two letters; their names will be found in the acknowledgments and in the bibliographical record attached to each letter. I have seen most of the letters above, or photostats of them. The only notable exceptions are the MSS of Sir John Shelley-Rolls and Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer. Sir John Shelley-Rolls sent me his copies, which he himself had checked with the originals.

In describing the MSS, I have usually employed the terms used by the libraries, booksellers, or auction companies owning or selling them. It is regrettable that the systems used are not always the same. The Huntington Library uses the standard system employed for classifying books before 1850. But most of the booksellers have not used this system exactly. Many letters described by the Huntington Library as 16mo would be classed by the booksellers as 12mo or even as small 8vo. Usually, however, there is little variation in the general meaning of 4to and 8vo. Booksellers seldom list any MS as smaller than 12mo. In some instances the dimensions in inches have been given.



## *Acknowledgments*

A work of this kind cannot be accomplished without the kindness and co-operation of many persons and institutions. It is a pleasure to recall and to acknowledge my obligations. To many besides those mentioned here, I am indebted for answers to inquiries and for bits of information; to these unchronicled ones I am no less grateful.

To the Henry E. Huntington Library I must say a special word of thanks. Not only have I been permitted to publish its 182 letters, mostly unpublished heretofore, but I have received a great deal of help from its efficient and obliging staff.

The Bodleian Library and the British Museum I must also thank briefly and inadequately for permission to use their letters and for much assistance and kindness.

Sir John C. E. Shelley-Rolls, Bart., has contributed greatly to the value of this book by permitting me to use his large collection of letters. He has likewise assisted me in gaining access to other letters. For these services and for personal courtesies, I thank him.

Professor Newman I. White of Duke University has put at my disposal a considerable body of personal notes, has answered innumerable inquiries, and has given me the advantage of his unsurpassed knowledge of Shelley research. Though his unwearying assistance and encouragement are beyond praise, above these I value his friendship.

Professor Norman L. Torrey has aided me greatly in securing photostats, and I wish to thank him also.

Professor Elizabeth Nitchie of Goucher College deserves particular thanks for her labors in preparing the index. In having her assistance I am especially fortunate, for she has an expert knowledge of Mary Shelley.

The libraries, persons, and booksellers that have permitted me to use their original Mary Shelley letters are: the Bodleian Library, the Boston Public Library, the Brick Row Book Shop, the British Museum, Mr. J. H. Coste, Dobell's Antiquarian Bookstore of Tunbridge Wells, the Duke University Library, Francis Edwards, Ltd., J. Kyrle Fletcher, Ltd., Thomas J. Gannon, Inc., the Harvard University Library; the late Mr. Alexander Hay, Coolangatta, Berry, N.S.W., Australia; Walter M. Hill, Chicago; Mr. Frank J.



Hogan, Washington, D.C.; the Henry E. Huntington Library; the Luther A. Brewer Collection, University of Iowa; the Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome, Italy; Raphael King, Ltd., Maggs Brothers, Ltd., the Pierpont Morgan Library, Sir John Murray, Myers & Co., Ltd., the late A. Edward Newton; the Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, New York Public Library; Miss Sylva Norman, Oxford; Michael Papantonio, New York; the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; the Preussische Staatsbibliothek, Berlin; Colbeck Radford & Co., Ltd.; Dr. Herman T. Radin, New York; the John Rylands Library, the National Library of Scotland, Sir John C. E. Shelley-Rolls, Bart., B. F. Stevens & Brown, Ltd., Suckling & Co.; the Miriam E. Stark Collection, University of Texas; James Tregaskis & Son; the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge University; the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand; the late Sir Hugh Walpole; the Chapin Collection, Williams College; the Dr. Williams Library, London; the late Mr. Thomas J. Wise.

Other persons to whom I owe thanks, in many instances for considerable help, are: Dr. J. Q. Adams, director of the Folger Shakespeare Library; Mrs. Helen Rossetti Angeli; Mr. Edmund Blunden; Mr. Julian P. Boyd, librarian for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Mr. Ralph Brown; Dr. R. W. Chapman; Lady Dorothea Charnwood; Mr. Jackson Davis; Professor Waldo H. Dunn, Scripps College; the late Mr. Frederick Edgcumbe, curator of the Keats Museum, Hampstead; Mr. Maurice Buxton Forman; Mr. Creighton Gilbert; the late Dr. George S. Gordon, president of Magdalen College and vice-chancellor of the University, Oxford; Mr. Duncan Gray, librarian of the Nottingham Public Libraries; Miss R. Glynn Grylls, author of *Mary Shelley* (1938); Dr. Henry Guppy, librarian of the John Rylands Library; Mr. E. Byrne Hackett of the Brick Row Book Shop; Professor Raymond D. Havens, Johns Hopkins University; Mr. R. H. Hill, secretary of the Bodleian Library; Dr. Percy W. Long; the late Mr. E. V. Lucas; Dr. A. B. Poynton, former master of University College, Oxford; Miss Fannie E. Ratchford, Wrenn Library, University of Texas; Miss Vera Signorelli of the Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome; Mr. L. Herman Smith, formerly of the Huntington Library; Mr. William Force Stead, Worcester College, Oxford; Mr. Arthur Swann; and Mr. Owen D. Young.

The three institutions whose generosity and interest made this book possible in the beginning are: the General Education Board, which granted me a fellowship for research abroad in 1936-37; the Rotograph Committee of the Modern Language Association, which made me a generous grant for photo-stats of letters abroad; and Mercer University, which, besides allowing me special privileges in several instances, also supplied me with funds for photo-stats. For assistance in making the publication of the letters possible, I am greatly obliged to the American Council of Learned Societies for a generous grant, and to Mercer University and Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer for additional grants.

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## *The Letters Previously Printed*

Every early and important appearance of a letter in print has been noted in the bibliographical record after each letter; but the frequent quotation of them in more recent Shelley literature, when these have no source or textual value, has not been recorded.

It is not possible, without the use of a great deal of space, to indicate either the correctness or the completeness of the printed texts cited. In many instances notations concerning the degree of completeness have been made; but the absence of them is in no way an indication that the text is either reliable or complete. The texts of *Shelley Memorials*, *Shelley and Mary*, and Marshall's *Life and Letters of Mary W. Shelley* often appear to be complete when they are far from being so. *Shelley and Mary* was, of course, the chief source for Dowden's *Life of Shelley* and Marshall's *Life and Letters*. With reference to the letters which they print from that source, it is worth noting that, though in a few instances Dowden corrects his texts from the original letters, Marshall depends entirely upon the book, never showing any signs of having seen the original letters which were in the hands of Lady Jane Shelley. The texts in *Shelley and Mary*, though not always accurate or complete, are on the whole fairly good.

The following list of the chief sources for the printed texts of the letters may be useful for reference. All other printed sources are sufficiently identified in the bibliographical record appended to each letter. Every appearance of a letter, in whole or in part, in the books and periodicals below has been recorded, with the following exceptions: (1) brief quotations in Rossetti's *Mrs. Shelley* and Ingpen's *Shelley in England* have been omitted, and (2) only letters first printed in Helen Moore's *Mary W. Shelley* and Gryll's *Mary Shelley* have been noted. The most important publications in the list are identified by an asterisk.

- 1859: \*Lady [Jane] Shelley, ed., *Shelley Memorials*. London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1859.
- 1862: Richard Garnett, ed., *Relics of Shelley*. London, Edward Moxon & Co., 1862.
- 1862: [Thornton Hunt, ed.] *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*. Edited by his Eldest Son. London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1862. 2 vols.



- 1880: H. Buxton Forman, ed., *The Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*. London, Reeves and Turner, 1880. 4 vols.
- 1882: \**Shelley and Mary*. For Private Circulation Only. [1882] 4 vols. (The Shelley family papers, privately printed for Sir Percy Florence and Lady Jane Shelley.)<sup>1</sup>
- 1886: \*Edward Dowden, *The Life of P. B. Shelley*. London, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1886. 2 vols. [Referred to as *Dowden* under the caption PRINTED.]
- 1886: Helen Moore, *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*. Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1886.
- 1887: Edward J. Trelawny, *Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author*. A New Edition. London, Pickering and Chatto, 1887. (Published as *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron*, 1858; as *Records*, 1878, 2 vols.)
- 1889: \*Mrs. Julian Marshall, *The Life and Letters of Mary W. Shelley*. London, Richard Bentley & Son, 1889. 2 vols. [Referred to as *Marshall* under the caption PRINTED.]
- 1889: [T. J. Wise, ed.] *Letters From P. B. Shelley to Jane Clairmont*. London, Privately Printed, 1889.
- 1890: Mrs. Lucy Madox Rossetti, *Mrs. Shelley*. London, W. H. Allen & Co., 1890. (Eminent Women Series.)
- 1894: T. J. Wise, ed., *Letters From P. B. Shelley to J. H. Leigh Hunt*. London, Privately Printed, 1894. 2 vols.
- 1895: W. R. Nicoll and T. J. Wise, eds., *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1895-96. 2 vols.
- 1907: \*[F. B. Sanborn, ed.] *The Romance of Mary W. Shelley, John Howard Payne, and Washington Irving*. The Bibliophile Society. Printed for Members Only. Boston, 1907. [Referred to as *Romance* under the caption PRINTED.]
- 1910: H. Buxton Forman, ed., *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*. London, Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1910.
- 1917: Roger Ingpen, *Shelley in England, New Facts and Letters*. London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1917.
- 1918: \**Letters of Mary W. Shelley* [to Leigh and Marianne Hunt], with Introduction and Notes by Henry H. Harper. Printed only for members of The Bibliophile Society. Boston, 1918. [Referred to as *Letters* under the caption PRINTED.]
- 1922: \*John Murray, ed., *Lord Byron's Correspondence*. London, John Murray, 1922. 2 vols.

<sup>1</sup> Twelve copies were printed. Copies are now in the possession of: The Bodleian Library (2 copies, one a final proof), Lord Abinger (2 copies), the British Museum (the Edward Dowden-T. J. Wise copy), Sir John C. E. Shelley-Rolls, Mr. Carl H. Pforzheimer (2 copies), University of Texas, Huntington Library, University of California, Professor Waldo H. Dunn of Scripps College. A photostat of the British Museum copy is on deposit in the Library of Congress for the Modern Language Association.

- 1924: Thomas J. Wise, ed., *A Shelley Library*. London, Printed for Private Circulation Only, 1924.
- 1926: R. H. Hill, ed., *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian Library*. Oxford, Printed for the Bodleian Library, 1926.
- 1926: \*Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck, eds., *The Complete Works of P. B. Shelley*. London, Published for the Julian Editions by E. Benn, Ltd., 1926–30. 10 vols. (Roger Ingpen, ed., Shelley's Letters, VIII–X, 1926.) [Referred to as *Julian Edition* under caption PRINTED.]
- 1929: \*R. H. Hill and Frederick L. Jones, eds., "The Letters of Mary Shelley in the Bodleian Library" [45 unpublished letters], *The Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, Nos. 63–64 (1929, ed., Hill); VIII, Nos. 93–95 (1937, ed., Jones).
- 1938: R. Glynn Grylls, *Mary Shelley. A Biography*. London, Oxford University Press, 1938.

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## *Editor's Introduction*

This attempt to bring together Mary Shelley's correspondence would never have met with Mary's approval, for she shrunk from publicity and knew better than some of her admirers that her letters lack the concentration, felicity of phrase, and play of imagination which characterize the letters of Shelley, Byron, Lamb, Keats, and even Claire Clairmont. On July 7 and December 29, 1845, she wrote to Claire: "I never was a good letter writer & you always were"; and "I hope you will burn my letters—I should be very sorry they ever saw light—I have not the art of letter writing— You have to an eminent degree." A respectable number of her letters are, however, definitely good reading. But a collection of the present size could not be justified by the general quality of the letters or by Mary Shelley's importance as a writer. It is as the wife of Shelley that she excites our interest and arouses our desire to know as much about her as we can. Only the very unobservant can have failed to see how important her letters are in illuminating the life of Shelley, and the scholar must often have deplored the impossibility of consulting them in a single convenient collection. This edition would therefore be worth while if it attempted nothing more than to assemble the letters from their widely scattered printed sources and to present complete and authoritative texts of them.

But much more, it is hoped, has been achieved. Mary Shelley does not cease to interest us after Shelley's death. She had much to do with the establishment of Shelley's reputation as a great man and poet; she reared and educated Shelley's only surviving son; she continued her association with Shelley's old friends; and she is a remarkable woman in her own right. Concerning all these matters there are many new details. Moreover, in the present volume we can for the first time follow continuously and adequately Mary's long life after Shelley's death. Although there are still many gaps, there are enough facts to enable us to know her and her affairs as they have never been known before. Much that was known already, such as her friendship with John Howard Payne, can now be viewed in its proper connection with the other events of her life. Her correspondence with Sir Timothy Shelley and his solicitor, Whitton (and, later, Gregson), printed in part by Ingpen, can now be read as a whole.

Of the letters and part letters in this edition, only about half have previously been available in any printed text. In addition to the old, there is, in consequence, much new information. The letters to Charles Ollier, Henry Colburn, Sir John Bowring, John Murray, Alaric A. Watts, Frederick Reynolds, C. C. Clarke, Edward Moxon, and others—letters mostly unpublished heretofore and brought together from many sources—illustrate Mary Shelley's strenuous literary activity after Shelley's death. These new letters have led incidentally to the discovery of three of her articles in the *Westminster Review* and to the identification of several of her poems. It may be said that, for the first time, the details of her work are complete enough to constitute a history of her literary and scholarly life. Her *Six Weeks' Tour*, novels, tales, poems, poetical dramas, articles, biographies of notable French, Italian, and Spanish men, and the *Rambles in Germany and Italy*; her editing of Shelley's *Posthumous Poems*, *Poetical Works*, *Prose Works (Essays, &c.)*; her assisting Thomas Moore with his *Life of Byron* and Trelawny in publishing *The Adventures of a Younger Son*—all these, and many more related literary activities, show an intellectual vigor which has yet to receive a just evaluation. Her creation of *Frankenstein* at the age of eighteen is a marvel known to many; but few if any are aware that *Valperga*, her second novel, excels the first almost as much as *Alastor* surpasses *Queen Mab*. It is, indeed, her best novel, having a richness of imaginative style and a creative force in combination with a thoroughness of scholarship that are exhibited in none of her other works. Shelley and Godwin enthusiastically recognized its advance beyond *Frankenstein*, and rightfully expected great things of her in the future. But with Shelley's death the stimulus that made her imagination glow was gone, and her later novels (*The Last Man*, *Perkin Warbeck*, *Lodore*, and *Falkner*) show a sad falling off; they were rather tasks to be done for money than products of inspiration. Mary's intellectual strength, however, did not diminish. Though one may doubt her ability to accomplish all that she proposed to herself, the list of subjects which she submitted to John Murray on August 9, 1830, is impressive: The Life of Madame de Staël, The Life of Mahomet, The Conquests of Mexico and Peru, A History of the Manners and Literature of England from Queen Anne to the French Revolution, from Pope to Horace Walpole, a similar book on Continental Manners and Literature, The Lives of the English Philosophers.

Of special importance are the 101 letters to Claire Clairmont. Of the many letters which she wrote to Claire, only seven have heretofore been published, four completely and three very incompletely. These new letters belong almost entirely to 1842-49 and illuminate those last years of her life, which have been relatively obscure. About Claire, Percy Florence Shelley, Peacock, Hunt, Hogg, Jane Williams (long since Mrs. Hogg), Trelawny, Medwin, and the Masons of Pisa—all of whom interest us because of Shelley—we learn much. And on the whole it is rather sad news, for since Shelley's day they had not only grown old, but degenerated. Claire is as restless as ever, and more dismal; Hogg and

Jane exist in a manner suggestive of the sordid, Jane's children and Hogg's daughter greatly complicating the affairs of the family; Hunt's hopefulness and precarious finances are much the same, but Marianne is something of a problem, and the children, now grown, meet with a variety of fortunes which both rejoice and afflict Hunt and always interest and sometimes disgust Mary. Trelawny has withdrawn himself from active friendship; Peacock pursues his calm way, though disturbed at times by his daughter Mary, in whom Mary Shelley has a warm interest; Medwin is cut off entirely by Mary after he attempts to blackmail her in connection with the publication of his *Life of Shelley* (1847). In Italy, the two daughters of the Masons, Nerina and Laura, live feverish and even tragic lives with their Italian and French husbands. These letters to Claire also tell us of Mary's tours on the Continent; how she managed the estate which, after so many years of waiting for Sir Timothy Shelley to die, came into her and Percy Florence's hands in 1844; and her great concern about getting her son properly established in life. That son was a disappointment, though Mary would not fully admit it even to herself; she could never forget that, wanting as he was in ambition and genius, he was always a loving and obedient child.

Perhaps the most dramatic events revealed by the letters to Claire are those relating to Mary's connection with the Italian political exile Gatteschi and his companions, in 1843-45. The overly-ardent letters which she permitted herself to write Gatteschi, and her frantic efforts to recover them when the talented Italian proved himself a blackguard, constitute a stirring and rather surprising episode in her life. After recovering her letters (which must have been written in Italian, for Gatteschi knew English very imperfectly), Mary doubtless destroyed them at once.

Still another episode in these last years of her life brought Mary into contact with the baser element in human society. This was the attempt of the notorious "G. Byron," forger, to blackmail her in 1845-46. The letters to Thomas Hookham, printed here for the first time, reveal a part of Byron's activities hitherto unknown, and put an entirely new interpretation upon the origin of his evil-doing. The fact that he would not have dared to sell to Mary forged letters of her own or of Shelley's shows clearly that in the beginning he must have had in hand some authentic letters, and possibly not a few of them; certainly Mary was convinced that he had such letters and that the particular letters which she bought from him were genuine.

The G. Byron incident likewise reveals again the grand passion of Mary's life—her love for Shelley. Her eagerness to get hold of the letters which had been lost a quarter of a century ago is but a part of the story of her lifelong zeal for the advancement of Shelley's works and fame. Everything connected with Shelley was precious, and she coveted its possession. Her enthusiasm communicated itself to Sir Percy Florence and Lady Jane Shelley, who through

their long lives continued to accumulate the materials essential for a complete and accurate knowledge of Shelley.

A pleasant aspect of her life is found in her correspondence with Alexander Berry, who had married her cousin, Elizabeth Wollstonecraft, and had migrated in 1819 with her and her brother Edward to Australia, where he became a highly successful pioneer.

The letters also reveal in Mary's character an element which persisted from first to last: her invariable attraction to young men of literary talent, especially if they were poets and needed help. Shelley himself is the first and unrivalled illustration. But after his death she thought kindly of B. W. Procter, enjoyed the friendship of John Howard Payne, admired Washington Irving and wished much to cultivate their acquaintanceship into intimacy, was pleased with the attentions of Prosper Mérimée and apparently refused his proposal of marriage. In the last decade of her life, her warm friendship for the youthful but poetical Alexander A. Knox and her disappointment in the very talented but quarrelsome musician, Henry Hugh Pearson, are but further examples of this element. The whole Gatteschi affair is attributable to the same cause. By none of these cases was her devotion to Shelley's memory overshadowed or even dimmed, nor was a desire to marry again always present. Her refusals of Payne, Mérimée, Trelawny, and Gatteschi show clearly that the affection she longed for could not make her swerve from the path of duty. And yet it must be admitted that if the genius with ample resources had come Mary's way, she might have married again.

Taken as a whole, Mary Shelley's one hundred correspondents in these volumes are an impressive lot, and they by no means represent all those with whom she exchanged letters; in fact, whole portions of her life are not represented by a single letter. Her friendship with the Robinsons, Pauls, Sandfords, Beauclercs, and others does not appear except incidentally, mainly in her letters to Claire. But the names of Crabb Robinson, Sir Walter Scott, Lady Morgan, Mary Lamb, Cyrus Redding, Joseph Severn, Vincent Novello, Walter Savage Landor, Thomas Campbell, Douglas Jerrold, Abraham Hayward, and Charles Sumner, in addition to those already mentioned, promise good reading and sometimes important facts.

It would be idle to attempt to put into an introduction a notice of everything new to be found in the letters. The reader will, I trust, welcome alike the old and the new.

*The Letters of Mary W. Shelley*

PART I : WITH SHELLEY





# *The Letters of Mary W. Shelley*

PART I : WITH SHELLEY



## 1. *To Shelley*<sup>1</sup>

[London, Tuesday, October 25, 1814]

For what a minute did I see you yesterday—is this the way my beloved that we are to live till the sixth in the morning I look for you and when I awake I turn to look on you— dearest Shelley you are solitary and uncomfortable why cannot I be with you to cheer you and to press you to my heart oh my love you have no friends why then should you be torn from the only one who has affection for you— But I shall see you tonight and this is the hope that I shall live on through the day—be happy dear Shelley and think of me— Why do I say this dearest & only one I know how tenderly you love me and how you repine at this absence from me— When shall we be free from fear of treachery?

I send you the letter I told you of from Harriet<sup>2</sup> and a letter we received yesterday from fanny<sup>3</sup> the history of this interview I will tell you when I come—but perhaps as it is so rainy a day Fanny will not be allowed to come at all—

My love my own one be happy—

<sup>1</sup> The events connected with letters 1–5 are related in detail by Dowden (Edward Dowden, *The Life of P. B. Shelley* [London, Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1886, 2 vols.], I, 488–505), who dates the letters. After eloping on July 28 and spending six weeks on the Continent, Shelley and Mary arrived in England on September 13, where they spent (in London) some miserable months of poverty until the death of Sir Bysshe Shelley on January 6, 1815. Godwin and his household refused to see them, but Fanny Imlay and Charles Clairmont managed a few secret interviews. The darkest days for Shelley and Mary were between October 23 and November 9, during which time Shelley had to separate from Mary, in order to avoid arrest for debt, probably debts incurred by Harriet. Charters, the coachmaker, and a Mrs. Stewart (or Stuart) seem to have been the chief creditors. Hookham, the publisher, was somehow involved. Though at first the Shelleys blamed him for their distress, they seem soon to have been reconciled with him. Shelley and Mary had to meet secretly at inns, in Gray's Inn Gardens, and elsewhere. From midnight Saturday until midnight Sunday, when bailiffs were powerless, they were together. During these days Shelley was feverishly engaged with half a dozen lawyers and moneylenders, attempting to raise money. In some way he managed to arrange his affairs by November 9, when he and Mary were again united without further fear of arrest, for the time being. Mary has given a fictitious account of these hectic days in her novel *Lodore* (1835).

<sup>2</sup> Harriet Westbrook, Shelley's first wife. A month later, on November 30, Harriet gave birth to Charles, Shelley's second child (died 1826).

<sup>3</sup> Fanny Imlay, daughter of Mary Wollstonecraft and Captain Gilbert Imlay. This letter, says Dowden, "made appointments for a meeting between Fanny and Claire."

I was so dreadfully tired yesterday that I was obliged to take a coach home forgive this extravagance but I am so very weak at present & I had been so agitated through the day that I was not able to stand a mornings rest however will set me quite right again and I shall be quite well when I meet you this evening—will you be at the door of the coffee house at five oclock as it is disagreeable to go into those places and I shall be there exactly at that time & we will go into St. Pauls where we can sit down

I send you Diogenes<sup>4</sup> as you have no books— Hookham was so ill tempered as not to send the books I asked for

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.129–30); A. L. (unsigned), 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 44–45; Dowden, I, 493–94; Marshall, I, 96; Lucy M. Rossetti, *Mrs. Shelley*, 81–82; Julian edition, IX, 99–100. (Both *Shelley and Mary* and Marshall print this and the [October 28] letter as one.) TEXT: From original letter.

## 2. To Shelley

[London, Thursday morning, October 27, 1814]

My own love

I do not know by what compulsion I am to answer you but your porter says I must so I do—

By a miracle I saved your £5 & I will bring it<sup>1</sup>— I hope indeed; oh my loved Shelley we shall indeed be happy

I meet you at three and bring heaps of Skinner Street news— Heaven bless my love & take care of him

his own Mary

ORIGINAL: Collection of the late Frank B. Bemis of Boston, which was (in 1937) already slated for sale; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: Copied into Dowden's copy of *Shelley and Mary* (I, blank page opposite p. 36) by "C. W. F[rederickson].," who owned the MS. in 1886; Dowden, I, 495; Lucy M. Rossetti's *Mrs. Shelley*, 82; a facsimile in *Scribner's Magazine*, July, 1922, 77 (Article: Harry B. Smith, "Books and Autograph Letters of Shelley"); Julian edition, IX, 101. TEXT: From facsimile in *Scribner's Magazine*.

## 3. To Shelley (a fragment)

[London, October 28, 1814]

So this is the end of my letter—dearest love what do they mean—I detest Mrs. G[odwin] she plagues my father out of his life & then—well no matter— Why will not Godwin follow the obvious bent of his affections & be reconciled to us—no his prejudices the world and *she*— do you not hate her my love—all these forbid it— What am I to do trust to time of course—for what else can I do

Goodnight my love—tomorrow I will seal this blessing on your lips dear good creature press me to you and hug your own Mary to your heart perhaps

<sup>4</sup> "Probably a translation of Wieland's 'Diogenes.'"—Dowden's note, I, 494.

<sup>1</sup> The £5 was secured by the pawning of Shelley's microscope at Davidson's, a pawnbroker's shop in Skinner Street.

she will one day have a father till then be every thing to me love—& indeed I will be a good girl and never vex you any more I will learn Greek and—but when shall we meet when I may tell you all this & you will so sweetly reward me—oh we must meet soon for this is a dreary life I am weary of it—a poor widowed deserted thing no one cares for her—but—ah love is not that enough—indeed I have a very sincere affection for my own Shelley—

But Good night I am woefully tired & so sleepy— I shall dream of you ten to one when naughty one you have quite forgotten me—

Take me—one kiss—well that is enough—tomorrow

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.131); A.L. (unsigned), 2 pp. 4to (a fragment). PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 45; Dowden, I, 498; Marshall, I, 96–97; Julian edition, IX, 104. (*Shelley and Mary* and Marshall print this as part of the [October 25] letter.) TEXT: From original letter.

#### 4. To Shelley

[London, Thursday night, November 3, 1814]

Dearest Love

I am so out of spirits I feel so lonely but we shall meet tomorrow so I will try to be happy— Grays inn Gardens is I fear a dangerous place yet can you think of any other.

I received your letter tonight I wanted one for I had not received one for almost two days but do not think I mean anything by this my love— I know you took a long long walk yesterday so you could not write but I who am at home who do not walk out I could write to you all day love—

Another circumstance has made me feel more solitary that letter I received today<sup>1</sup>—dear Shelley you will say I was deceived I know I am not—I know her unexampled frankness and sweetness of character but what must that character be who resists opinions preach——

Oh dear what am I writing I am indeed disappointed— I did think Isabel perfectly unprejudiced—she adores the shade of my mother but then a married man it is impossible to knock into some peoples heads that Harriet is selfish & unfeeling and that my father might be happy<sup>2</sup> if he chose—by that cant concerning *selling his daughter* I should half suspect that there has been some communication between the Skinner St. folks and them

Heigho love such is the world

How you reason and philosophize about love—do you know if I had been

<sup>1</sup> From Mr. David Booth, then or soon to be the husband of Isabel Baxter, who was a daughter of W. T. Baxter of Dundee and Mary's childhood friend. For long periods in 1812 and 1813 Mary visited the Baxters in Dundee. Booth refused to allow Isabel to continue her intimacy with Mary after her elopement in July, 1814. Another attempt made by Mary in 1817 also failed (see Letter 32, note 3). After Shelley's death the friendship was resumed and continued until Mary's death in 1851. Sir Percy carried out Mary's wishes by allowing Mrs. Booth £50 per annum and giving her a suit of mourning. In her journal, on November 3, Mary wrote: "Receive a letter from Mr. Booth; so all my hopes are over there. Ah! Isabel, I did not think you would act thus."

<sup>2</sup> That is, happy over her union with Shelley. It was rumored that Godwin (who lived in Skinner Street) had sold Mary and Claire to Shelley.

asked I could not have given one reason in its favour—yet I have as great an opinion as you concerning its exaltedness and love very tenderly to prove my theory—adieu for the present it has struck eight & in an hour or two I will wish you goodnight.

Well so now I am to write a goodnight with the old story of I wish I could say it to you—yes my love it has indeed become an old story but I hope the last chapter is come— I shall meet you tomorrow love & if you do but get money love which indeed you must we will defy our enemies & our friends (for aught I see they are all as bad as one another) and we will not part again — Is not that a delightful word it shall cheer my dreams

No answer from Hooper— I wish he would write oh how I long to [be] at our dear home where nothing can trouble us neither friends or enemies— dont be angry at this you know my love they are all a bad set— But Nantgwilt do you not wish to be settled there at a home you know love—with your own Mary nothing to disturb you studying walking & other such like amusements—oh its much better believe [me] not to be able to see the light of the sun for mountains than for houses

You dont say a word in your letter—you naughty love to ease one of my anxieties not a word of Lambert of Harriet of Mrs. Stuart<sup>3</sup> of money or anything—but all the reasonings you used to persuade Mr. Peacock love was a good thing Now you know I did not want converting—but my love do not be displeased at my chattering in this way for you know the expectation of a letter from you when absent always makes my heart jump so do you think it says nothing when one actually arrives.

Your own Mary who loves you so tenderly

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 126–27); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to.  
PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 32–33; Dowden, I, 501–502; Julian edition, IX, 107–108. TEXT: From original letter.

## 5. *To Shelley*

[London, November, 1814]

I enclose you a letter [*MS torn*]

I would not advise you [ ] all your estate or to [ ] Post-obits from too many people— Sir John Shelley<sup>1</sup> I think the best to treat with— Yet till you have some money from some of them do not [? break] with any—

But you know all about this better than I do—so goodnight— May you sleep as well as though it were in my arms—but I know you wont—dearest love Goodnight

[P.S.] [ ] to send the enclosed [ ] scribbled it all over so [ ] as it is—but I have for [ ] a time for meeting [At] three o'clock exactly

<sup>3</sup> Lambert was Godwin's creditor; Mrs. Stuart, one of Shelley's.

<sup>1</sup> Of Michelgrove, Shelley's great-uncle, who moved in much higher society than Shelley's family. See Richard Edgcumbe (ed.), *The Diary of Frances, Lady Shelley* (London, John Murray, 1912).

just at Holborn bars—I know you will be punctual for you know I dislike walking up an[d] down in a public place

ADDRESS: Percy Bysshe Shelley Esq. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c. 1, f. 128); A. L., 2 pp. 4to, torn in several places. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 43; *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 10. TEXT: From original letter.

## 6–16. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

[The originals of these and twelve other letters to Hogg are owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. Their publication along with Shelley's letters to Hogg as *Shelley Letters*, edited by Dr. George S. Gordon, Magdalen College, Oxford University, has long and vainly been expected. Dr. Gordon's death in March, 1942, has further complicated the question of publication.<sup>2</sup>]

6. [Nelson Square, London] Jan. 1815
7. Nelson Square, Jan. [? 4] 1815
8. 43 Southampton Buildings, [? January 6, 1815]
9. [Nelson Square, January 7, 1815]
10. [Nelson Square] Monday Morning [January 23, 1815]
11. [London, March 2, 1815]
12. [London, March 6, 1815]
13. [London, ? April 24, 1815]
14. Windmill Inn, Salt Hill, April 25, 1815
15. [Windmill Inn, Salt Hill, April 26, 1815]
16. Windmill Inn, Salt Hill, April 26, 1815

## 17. To Shelley<sup>1</sup>

Clifton,  
July 27, 1815

My beloved Shelley,

What I am now going to say is not a freak from a fit of low spirits—but it is what [I] earnestly entreat you to attend to and to comply with—

<sup>2</sup> These eleven love letters from Mary to Hogg are nothing less than amazing. They reveal a situation which not even Shelley's enemies have ever believed existed. The letters make it plain (by inference) that Shelley advocated a sort of communal love and that Mary was making a great effort to put his idea into practice. That Hogg made love to her and that she attempted to return his love, all with the approval of Shelley, is evident. There is nothing secret or underhanded in the whole affair; all the while, to Hogg himself, Mary asserts her devotion to Shelley. Mary and Shelley's journal shows that since their return from Switzerland Hogg was a daily visitor; often he spent days together with them and frequently spent the night on other occasions. In Mary's letters are several expressions that seem strongly to suggest that Mary included, or meant eventually to include, sexual relationship with Hogg; but there is no absolute proof of this. It may be significant that from Mary's journal covering these early months of 1815 a number of pages at various points have been removed. In 1815 Mary was trying to force herself to love Hogg. Even then she saw evidence of that quality which by 1817 and thereafter made her dislike Hogg, although she remained on amicable terms with him: namely, Hogg's selfishness, his self-centeredness, and his love of comfort.

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Sir Bysshe on January 6, Shelley's circumstances had become easier; eventually most of his many debts were paid and an income of £1000 a year settled on him. Claire, whose presence had become unbearable to Mary, had been sent to Lynmouth, Devon, on May 13,

We ought not to be absent any longer indeed we ought not— I am not happy at it—when I retire to my room no sweet Love—after dinner no Shelley—though I have heaps of things *very particular* to say—in fine either you must come back or I must come to you directly— You will say shall we neglect taking a house—a dear home? No my love I would not for worlds give up that—but I know what *seeking* for a house is and trust me it is a very *very* long job too long for one love to undertake in the absence of the other— Dearest, I know how it will be—we shall both of us be put off day after day with the hopes of the success of the next days search for I am frightened to think how long—do you not see it in this light my own love— We have been now a long time seperated and a house is not yet in sight and if even if [*sic*] you should fix on one which I do not hope for in less than a week then the settling &c indeed, my love, I cannot bear to remain so long without you—so if you will not give me leave—expect me without it some day—and indeed it is very likely that you may for I am quite sick of passing day after day in this hopeless way—

Pray is Clary with you? for I have enquired several times & no letters—but seriously it would not in the least surprise me if you have written to her from London & let her know that you are there without me that she should have taken some such freak—

The Dormouse has hid the broach—& pray why am I for ever & ever to be denied the sight of my case? have you got it in your own possession? or where is it—it would give me very great pleasure if you would send it me—I hope you have not already appropriated it for if you have I shall think it un-Pecksie of you—as Maie was to give it you with her own hands on your birthday<sup>2</sup>—but it is of little consequence for I have no hope of se[e]ing you on that day—but I am mistaken—for I have hope & certainty for if you are not here on or before the 3rd of August I set off on the 4th in early coach so as to be with you in the evening of that dear day at least—

Tomorrow is the 28th of July<sup>3</sup>—dearest ought we not to have been together on that day—indeed we ought my love & I shall shed some tears to think we are not— Do not be angry dear love—your Pecksie is a good girl & is quite well now again—except a headach when she waits so anxiously for her loves letters—dearest best Shelley pray come to me—pray pray do not stay away from me—this is delightful weather and you better we might have a delightful excursion to Tintern Abbey—my dear dear Love—I most earnestly & with tearful eyes beg that I may come to you if you do not like to leave the searches after a house

It is a long time to wait even for an answer—tomorrow may bring good

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and was out of the way for some months. Mary and Shelley had toured the coast of Devon during part of the summer, and Mary had been left at Clifton while Shelley went to London to search for a house. He leased a house at Bishopsgate, near Windsor Forest, on August 3, and here they remained until they set off for the Continent in May, 1816.

<sup>2</sup> Pecksie and Maie: pet names for Mary. Shelley's birthday was August 4.

<sup>3</sup> Anniversary of their elopement in 1814.

news but I have no hope for you only set off to look after 4 in the afternoon—& what can be done at that hour of the day— You cannot . . .

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.144-45); A. L. (incomplete), 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 82-84; Dowden, I, 524-25; Marshall, I, 120-21. TEXT: From original letter.

18. (*Addressee unknown*)

Hôtel de Sécheron, Geneva,  
17th May, 1816.

We arrived at Paris on the 8th of this month, and were detained two days for the purpose of obtaining the various signatures necessary to our passports, the French Government having become much more circumspect since the escape of Lavalette. We had no letters of introduction, or any friend in that city, and were therefore confined to our hotel, where we were obliged to hire apartments for the week, although, when we first arrived, we expected to be detained one night only; for in Paris there are no houses where you can be accommodated with apartments by the day.

The manners of the French are interesting, although less attractive, at least to Englishmen, than before the last invasion of the Allies; the discontent and sullenness of their minds perpetually betrays itself. Nor is it wonderful that they should regard the subjects of a Government which fills their country with hostile garrisons, and sustains a detested dynasty on the throne, with an acrimony and indignation of which that Government alone is the proper object. This feeling is honourable to the French, and encouraging to all those of every nation in Europe who have a fellow-feeling with the oppressed, and who cherish an unconquerable hope that the cause of liberty must at length prevail.

Our route after Paris as far as Troyes<sup>1</sup> lay through the same uninteresting tract of country which we had traversed on foot nearly two years before, but on quitting Troyes we left the road leading to Neufchâtel, to follow that which was to conduct us to Geneva. We entered Dijon on the third evening after our departure from Paris, and passing through Dôle, arrived at Poligny. This town is built at the foot of Jura, which rises abruptly from a plain of vast extent. The rocks of the mountain overhang the houses. Some difficulty in procuring horses detained us here until the evening closed in, when we proceeded by the light of a stormy moon to Champagnolles, a little village situated in the depth of the mountains. The road was serpentine and exceedingly steep, and was overhung on one side by half-distinguished precipices, whilst the other was a gulf, filled by the darkness of the driving clouds. The dashing of the invisible streams announced to us that we had quitted the plains of France, as we slowly ascended amidst a violent storm of wind and rain, to Champagnolles, where we arrived at twelve o'clock the fourth night after our de-

<sup>1</sup> Where Shelley wrote Harriet the famous letter (August 13, 1814) inviting her to join them in Switzerland.



parture from Paris. The next morning we proceeded, still ascending among the ravines and valleys of the mountain. The scenery perpetually grows more wonderful and sublime; pine forests of impenetrable thickness and untrodden, nay, inaccessible expanse spread on every side. Sometimes the dark woods descending follow the route into the valleys, the distorted trees struggling with knotted roots between the most barren clefts; sometimes the road winds high into the regions of the frost, and then the forests become scattered, and the branches of the trees are loaded with snow, and half of the enormous pines themselves buried in the wavy drifts. The spring, as the inhabitants informed us, was unusually late, and indeed the cold was excessive; as we ascended the mountains the same clouds which rained on us in the valleys poured forth large flakes of snow thick and fast. The sun occasionally shone through these showers, and illuminated the magnificent ravines of the mountains, whose gigantic pines were, some laden with snow, some wreathed round by the lines of scattered and lingering vapour; others darting their spires into the sunny sky, brilliantly clear and azure.

As the evening advanced, and we ascended higher, the snow, which we had beheld whitening the overhanging rocks, now encroached upon our road, and it snowed fast as we entered the village of Les Rousses, where we were threatened by the apparent necessity of passing the night in a bad inn and dirty beds. For, from that place there are two roads to Geneva; one by Nion, in the Swiss territory, where the mountain route is shorter and comparatively easy at that time of the year, when the road is for several leagues covered with snow of an enormous depth; the other road lay through Gex, and was too circuitous and dangerous to be attempted at so late an hour in the day. Our passport, however, was for Gex, and we were told that we could not change its destination; but all these police laws, so severe in themselves, are to be softened by bribery, and this difficulty was at length overcome. We hired four horses, and ten men to support the carriage, and departed from Les Rousses at six in the evening, when the sun had already far descended, and the snow pelting against the windows of our carriage assisted the coming darkness to deprive us of the view of the lake of Geneva and the far-distant Alps.

The prospect around, however, was sufficiently sublime to command our attention—never was scene more awfully desolate. The trees in these regions are incredibly large, and stand in scattered clumps over the white wilderness; the vast expanse of snow was chequered only by these gigantic pines, and the poles that marked our road; no river nor rock-encircled lawn relieved the eye, by adding the picturesque to the sublime. The natural silence of that uninhabited desert contrasted strangely with the voices of the men who conducted us, who, with animated tones and gestures, called to one another in a *patois* composed of French and Italian, creating disturbance where, but for them, there was none. To what a different scene are we now arrived! To the warm sunshine, and to the humming of sun-loving insects. From the windows

of our hotel we see the lovely lake, blue as the heavens which it reflects, and sparkling with golden beams. The opposite shore is sloping and covered with vines, which, however, do not so early in the season add to the beauty of the prospect. Gentlemen's seats are scattered over these banks, behind which rise the various ridges of black mountains, and towering far above, in the midst of its snowy Alps, the majestic Mont Blanc, highest and queen of all. Such is the view reflected by the lake; it is a bright summer scene without any of that sacred solitude and deep seclusion that delighted us at Lucerne. We have not yet found out any very agreeable walks, but you know our attachment to water excursions. We have hired a boat, and every evening, at about six o'clock, we sail on the lake, which is delightful, whether we glide over a glassy surface or are speeded along by a strong wind. The waves of this lake never afflict me with that sickness that deprives me of all enjoyment in a sea-voyage; on the contrary, the tossing of our boat raises my spirits and inspires me with unusual hilarity. Twilight here is of short duration, but we at present enjoy the benefit of an increasing moon, and seldom return until ten o'clock, when, as we approach the shore, we are saluted by the delightful scent of flowers and new-mown grass, and the chirp of the grasshoppers, and the song of the evening birds.

We do not enter into society here, yet our time passes swiftly and delightfully.

We read Latin and Italian during the heats of noon, and when the sun declines we walk in the garden of the hotel, looking at the rabbits, relieving fallen cockchafers, and watching the motions of a myriad of lizards, who inhabit a southern wall of the garden. You know that we have just escaped from the gloom of winter and of London; and coming to this delightful spot during this divine weather, I feel as happy as a new-fledged bird, and hardly care what twig I fly to, so that I may try my new-found wings. A more experienced bird may be more difficult in its choice of a bower; but, in my present temper of mind, the budding flowers, the fresh grass of spring, and the happy creatures about me that live and enjoy these pleasures, are quite enough to afford me exquisite delight, even though clouds should shut out Mont Blanc from my sight. Adieu!

M. S.

ORIGINAL: Probably written specifically for the *Six-Weeks' Tour*. PRINTED: Mary Shelley, *History of a Six-Weeks' Tour* (1817); Dowden, II, 9-11 (quots., 35 lines); Marshall, I, 130-34; Julian edition, VI, 117-20. TEXT: From *Six-Weeks' Tour*.

## 19. (*Addressee unknown*)

Campagne Chapuis, near Coligny,  
1st June [1816]

You will perceive from my date that we have changed our residence since my last letter. We now inhabit a little cottage on the opposite shore of the

lake, and have exchanged the view of Mont Blanc and her snowy *aiguilles* for the dark frowning Jura, behind whose range we every evening see the sun sink, and darkness approaches our valley from behind the Alps, which are then tinged by that glowing rose-like hue which is observed in England to attend on the clouds of an autumnal sky when daylight is almost gone. The lake is at our feet, and a little harbour contains our boat, in which we still enjoy our evening excursions on the water. Unfortunately we do not now enjoy those brilliant skies that hailed us on our first arrival to this country. An almost perpetual rain confines us principally to the house; but when the sun bursts forth it is with a splendour and heat unknown in England. The thunderstorms that visit us are grander and more terrific than I have ever seen before. We watch them as they approach from the opposite side of the lake, observing the lightning play among the clouds in various parts of the heavens, and dart in jagged figures upon the piny heights of Jura, dark with the shadow of the overhanging clouds, while perhaps the sun is shining cheerily upon us. One night we *enjoyed* a finer storm than I had ever before beheld. The lake was lit up, the pines on Jura made visible, and all the scene illuminated for an instant, when a pitchy blackness succeeded, and the thunder came in frightful bursts over our heads amid the darkness.

But while I still dwell on the country around Geneva, you will expect me to say something of the town itself; there is nothing, however, in it that can repay you for the trouble of walking over its rough stones. The houses are high, the streets narrow, many of them on the ascent, and no public building of any beauty to attract your eye, or any architecture to gratify your taste. The town is surrounded by a wall, the three gates of which are shut exactly at ten o'clock, when no bribery (as in France) can open them. To the south of the town is the promenade of the Genevese, a grassy plain planted with a few trees, and called Plainpalais. Here a small obelisk is erected to the glory of Rousseau, and here (such is the mutability of human life) the magistrates, the successors of those who exiled him from his native country, were shot by the populace during that revolution which his writings mainly contributed to mature, and which, notwithstanding the temporary bloodshed and injustice with which it was polluted, has produced enduring benefits to mankind, which not all the chicanery of statesmen, nor even the great conspiracy of kings, can entirely render vain. From respect to the memory of their predecessors, none of the present magistrates ever walk in Plainpalais. Another Sunday recreation for the citizens is an excursion to the top of Mont Salère. This hill is within a league of the town, and rises perpendicularly from the cultivated plain. It is ascended on the other side, and I should judge from its situation that your toil is rewarded by a delightful view of the course of the Rhone and Arne, and of the shores of the lake. We have not yet visited it. There is more equality of classes here than in England. This occasions a greater freedom and refinement of manners among the lower orders than we meet with in our own coun-

try. I fancy the haughty English ladies are greatly disgusted with this consequence of republican institutions, for the Genevese servants complain very much of their *scolding*, an exercise of the tongue, I believe, perfectly unknown here. The peasants of Switzerland may not however emulate the vivacity and grace of the French. They are more cleanly, but they are slow and inapt. I know a girl of twenty who, although she had lived all her life among vineyards, could not inform me during what month the vintage took place, and I discovered she was utterly ignorant of the order in which the months succeed one another. She would not have been surprised if I had talked of the burning sun and delicious fruits of December, or of the frosts of July. Yet she is by no means deficient in understanding.

The Genevese are also much inclined to puritanism. It is true that from habit they dance on a Sunday, but as soon as the French Government was abolished in the town, the magistrates ordered the theatre to be closed, and measures were taken to pull down the building.

We have latterly enjoyed fine weather, and nothing is more pleasant than to listen to the evening song of the vine-dressers. They are all women, and most of them have harmonious although masculine voices. The theme of their ballads consists of shepherds, love, flocks, and the sons of kings who fall in love with beautiful shepherdesses. Their tunes are monotonous, but it is sweet to hear them in the stillness of evening, while we are enjoying the sight of the setting sun, either from the hill behind our house or from the lake.

Such are our pleasures here, which would be greatly increased if the season had been more favourable, for they chiefly consist in such enjoyments as sunshine and gentle breezes bestow. We have not yet made any excursion in the environs of the town, but we have planned several, when you shall again hear of us; and we will endeavour, by the magic of words, to transport the ethereal part of you to the neighbourhood of the Alps, and mountain streams, and forests, which, while they clothe the former, darken the latter with their vast shadows.—Adieu!

### M.

ORIGINAL: Probably written specifically for the *Six-Weeks Tour*. PRINTED: *History of a Six-Weeks' Tour* (1817); Dowden, 15 (quot., 15 lines); Marshall, I, 135–37; Julian edition, VI, 121–23. TEXT: From *Six-Weeks' Tour*.

## 20. To Shelley<sup>1</sup>

[Bath, December 4, 1816]

Sweet Elf

I got up very late this morning so that I could not attend Mr. West. I don't know any more. Good night.

<sup>1</sup> Having spent the summer in Geneva on intimate terms with Lord Byron, the Shelleys and Claire again arrived in England on September 8. Shelley proceeded to London to transact business and thence to Marlow to get Peacock's assistance in finding a suitable house. Claire's pregnancy, which they wished to keep from the Godwins, made it necessary that Mary and Claire should not go to London; therefore, they settled in Bath until Shelley could get a house.

Bath,

December 5th, 1816<sup>2</sup>

Sweet Elf

I was awakened this morning by my pretty babe<sup>3</sup> and was dressed time enough to take my lesson from Mr. West and (Thank God) finished that tedious ugly picture I have been so long about— I have also finished the 4 Chap[ter] of *Frankenstein*<sup>4</sup> which is a very long one & I think you would like it.

And where are you? and what are you doing my blessed love; I hope and trust that for *my* sake you did not go outside this wretched day, while the wind howls and the clouds seem to threaten rain. And what did my love think of as he rode along— Did he think about our home, our babe and his poor Pecksie? But I am sure you did and thought of them all with joy and hope— But in the choice of [a] residence—dear Shelley—pray be not too quick or atatch [*sic*] yourself too much to one spot— Ah—were you indeed a winged Elf and could soar over mountains & seas and could pounce on the little spot— A house with a lawn a river or lake—noble trees & divine mountains that should be our little mousehole to retire to. But never mind this—give me a garden & *absentia Clariæ* and I will thank my love for many favours.

If you, my love, go to London you will perhaps try to procure a good Livy, for I wish very much to read it— I must be more industrious especially in learning latin which I neglected shamefully last summer at intervals, and those periods of not reading at all put me back very far.

The Morning Chronicle as you will see does not make much of the riots which they say are entirely quieted and you would almost be enclined to say

<sup>2</sup> The date of this letter is very puzzling. The postmark ("Bath Dec. 5") is positive evidence that December 4 and 5 is correct, though in the original MS the "Bath, Dec. 5th" appears to belong to the first lines of the letter. The confusion is still greater when we read in Mary's journal for December 5 that "Shelley sets off for Marlow." This seems to confirm the date December 5 and 6, which appears in all printed copies of the letter. But then contradictions begin to appear. The journal for the fifth says "Drawing lesson," while the letter shows positively that the drawing lesson took place at least a day after Shelley's departure. The journal further agrees with the letter in these two statements: "There have been no letters of any kind today," and "I shall write to Mrs. G[odwin] tomorrow." In short, the journal and letter are, with reference to Shelley's departure, irreconcilable. Since the postmark fixes the date of the letter as December 4 and 5, my conjecture is that Mary got behind with her journal and, when writing up the last few days, got her facts mixed slightly. Indeed, the journal presents many examples of Mary's failure to post it each day.

The journal entries run thus (*Shelley and Mary* [The Shelley family papers, Privately Printed, 1882, 4 vols.], I, 166, 169): "*Wednesday, Dec. 4.*—A letter from Mrs. Godwin to Clare and to me a letter from Aunt Everina concerning my sister. Write, read the 'Life of Lorenzo.' Shelley reads the Appendix, and writes to Heyward and Papa; he reads the 25th chapter of Gibbon aloud. —*Thursday, Dec. 5.*—Shelley sets off for Marlow. Drawing lesson. Write; send a letter to Aunt Everina. Shelley read [*sic*] Lucian aloud to Clare; one ode of Horace; in the evening, the Quarterly Review and Locke. [*Doubtless this should read:* "a letter to Aunt Everina and Shelley; read Lucian . . ."] —*Friday, Dec. 6.*—Read Lucian; write; draw; read Horace. Letter from Mrs. Godwin and 100£. Write to Mrs. Godwin and Shelley; work; read the 'Rights of Woman.' "

<sup>3</sup> William, born January 24, 1816, at Bishopsgate.

<sup>4</sup> Begun at Geneva as a result of an agreement (June 18) among Byron, Shelley, Mary, and Dr. Polidori that each would write a "ghost story." Mary's *Frankenstein* and Dr. Polidori's *The Vampyre* (the original sketch of which was Byron's) are the only ones that were completed.

out of the mountain comes forth a mouse although I dare say poor Mrs. Platt does not think so<sup>5</sup>

The blue eyes of your sweet boy are staring at me while I write this he is a dear child and you love him tenderly, although I fancy your affection will encrease when he has a nursery to himself and only comes to you just dressed and in good humour— Besides when that comes to pass he will be a wise little man for he improves in mind rapidly. Tell me shall you be happy to have another little squaller? You will look grave on this, but I do not mean anything.

Leigh Hunt has not written. I would advise [a] letter ad[d]ressed to him at the Examiner office if there is no answer tomorrow—he may not be at the Vale of Health for it is odd that he does not acknowledge the receipt of so large a sum.<sup>6</sup> There have been no letters of any kind today.

Now, my dear, when shall I see you? Do not be very long away! take care of yourself; & take a house. I have a great fear that bad weather will set in. My airy Elf, how unlucky you are! I shall write to Mrs. G[odwin] tomorrow but let me know what you hear from Hayward and Papa as I am greatly interested in those affairs.<sup>7</sup> Adieu, sweetest, Love me tenderly and think of me with affection whenever anything pleases you greatly

Your affectionate girl  
Mary W. G.

New Bond Street

[P.S.] I have not asked Clare but I dare say she would send her love although I dare say she would scold you well if you were here. My compts & remembrances to Dame Peacock & son<sup>8</sup>—but [do] not let them see this—Sweet, adieu

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley, Esq-/ Great Marlow, Bucks. POSTMARK: [BA]TH/[DEC] 5/ [18]16. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.146-47); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 73 (extracts); *Shelley and Mary*, I, 167-68; Dowden, II, 61-63 (omits first 2 lines); Marshall I, 172-73. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>5</sup> "In the riots consequent on the distress in London, Mr. Platt, who kept a gunsmith's shop in Skinner Street—the street in which Godwin lived—was seriously wounded by a gunshot."—Dowden's note, II, 62.

<sup>6</sup> Though much earlier Shelley had communicated with Leigh Hunt, editor of the liberal *Examiner* and had even once met him (Dowden, II, 60-61), no friendship had developed. A real intimacy sprang up in October—December, 1816, however, and ripened quickly. Hunt won Shelley's lasting gratitude by his famous *Examiner* article on "Young Poets" (Reynolds, Keats, Shelley), of December 1, and his later defenses of his poetry and character, but more particularly by his sympathy during the trying months following Harriet's suicide. Shelley evidently made a considerable loan or gift of money to Hunt early in December, whether for Hunt's personal use or some cause is not known. Mary's journal for December 12 reads: "Letter from Shelley; he has gone to visit Leigh Hunt."—*Shelley and Mary*, I, 169.

<sup>7</sup> Months before, Shelley had given Godwin hopes of a gift of £300, on the strength of which Godwin had incurred obligations that were now due. Dowden's note on this passage (II, 63) is probably correct: "A letter from Mrs. Godwin with £100 came on December 6. . . . I infer that Godwin, negotiating on Shelley's behalf with Hayward, had obtained the money . . . and £100 over, for Shelley's own use, which Mrs. Godwin now sent to Mary."

<sup>8</sup> Thomas Love Peacock and his mother, then living in Marlow.

21. *To Shelley*<sup>1</sup>

Bath,  
Dec. 17th, 1816

My beloved friend,

I waited with the greatest anxiety for your letter— You are well & that assurance has restored some peace to me.

How very happy shall I be to possess those darling treasures that are yours — I do not exactly understand what Chancery has to do in this and wait with impatience for tomorrow when I shall hear whether they are with you—and then what will you do with them? My heart says bring them instantly here—but I submit to your prudence.

You do not mention Godwin— When I receive your letter tomorrow I shall write to Mrs. G[odwin]. I hope yet I fear that he will show on this occasion some disinterestedness— Poor dear Fanny if she had lived until this moment she would have been saved for my house would then have been a proper assylum for her<sup>2</sup>— Ah! my best love to you do I owe every joy every perfection that I may enjoy or boast of— Love me, sweet, for ever— But I [do] not mean—— I hardly know what I mean I am so agitated

Clare has a very bad cough but I think she is better today Mr. Cam talks of bleeding if she does not recover quickly—but [she] is positively resolved not to submit to that— She sends her love

My sweet love deliver some message from me to your kind friends at Ham[p]stead. Tell Mrs. Hunt that I am extremely obliged to her for the little profile she was so kind as to send me and thank Mr. H[unt] for his friendly message which I did not hear

These Westbrooks— But they have nothing to do with your sweet babes they are yours and I do not see the pretence for a suit but tomorrow I shall know all

Your box arrived today I shall send soon to the up[h]olsterer—for now I long more than ever that our house should be quickly ready for the reception of those dear children whom I love so tenderly then there will be a sweet brother and sister for my William who will lose his pre-eminence as eldest and be helped third at table—as his Aunt Clare is continually reminding him—

Come down to me sweetest as soon as you can for I long to see you and embrace— As to the event you allude [to] be governed by your friends & prudence as to when it ought to take place—but it must be in London<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A reply to Shelley's letter of December 16 from London (Roger Ingpen [ed.], *Shelley's Letters*, vols. VIII–X, *The Complete Works of P. B. Shelley*, Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck [eds.] [London, published for the Julian Editions by E. Benn., Ltd., 1926–30, 10 vols.], IX, 211–13). Shelley had returned to Bath on December 14. On the fifteenth came a letter from Hookham bearing the news that Harriet Westbrook's body had been found in the Serpentine, Hyde Park, on December 10. She had disappeared from her lodgings on November 9. Shelley hastened to London to claim his two children, Ianthe and Charles, from the Westbrooks. They were refused him, and the case to dispossess him permanently was put in Chancery.

<sup>2</sup> On October 9 Fanny Imlay (Godwin) had committed suicide at the Mackworth Arms Inn, Swansea, by taking laudanum.

Clare has just looked in—she begs you not to stay away long—to be more explicit in your letters and sends her love

You tell me to write a long letter and I would but that my ideas wander and my hand trembles come back to reassure me my Shelley & bring with you your darling Ianthe & Charles— Thank your kind friends I long to hear about Godwin.

Your Affectionate Companion

Mary W. G.

[P.S.] Have you called on Hogg I would hardly advise you— Remember me sweet in your sorrows as well as your pleasures they will I trust soften the one and heighten the other feeling Adieu

Be resolute for *Desse*<sup>4</sup> plainly wishes to procrastinate and make out a bill for his worthy patron— How it would please me if old Westbrook were to repent in his last moments and leave all his fortune away from that miserable and odious Eliza<sup>5</sup>

ADDRESS: Percy Bysshe Shelley Esq/ Messrs. Longdill & Butterfield/ 5 Gray's Inn Square/ London. POSTMARKS: (1) BATH/ 17 DE 17/ [1816] (2) E/ 18 DE 18/ 1816. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1 ff.148–49); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 172–73; Dowden, II, 70–71; Marshall, I, 176–78; *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 11–12 (supplies part of the subscription and the postscript about the Westbrooks omitted by Dowden). TEXT: From original letter.

## 22. To Marianne Hunt

Bath

Jan<sup>y</sup> 13th 1817

My dear Mrs. Hunt

I am going to trouble you with a very impertinent commission—but Mr. Shelley's thoughtlessness must be my excuse. Will you be so very kind as to ask him for his dirty linen and send it to the wash for him

If you trouble yourself to answer t[his] impertinent billet will you let me know how your health is and if you take the exercise that you ought. How is Mr. Hunt & the dear little children? In a month or six weeks I hope to see you and soon after to be favoured with your promised visit.

Will you also tell me how Mr. Shelley continues under the vexation of this hateful business.

Kiss the children for me—& every kind remembrance to Mr. H

Yours very sincerely

Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: Mrs. Hunt. ORIGINAL: Stark Collection, University of Texas; A.L.S., 1 p. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> The "event" was Shelley and Mary's marriage, which, in Longdill's (erroneous) opinion, would settle Shelley's right to the possession of his children by Harriet.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Westbrook's attorney.

<sup>5</sup> Shelley had written: "There can be no question that the beastly viper her sister, unable to gain profit from her connexion with me—has secured to herself the fortune of the old man [Mr. Westbrook]—who is now dying—by the murder of this poor creature [Harriet]."



23. *To Lord Byron*

Bath—

Jan. 13th 1817.

Dear Lord Byron

Shelley being in London upon business I take upon myself the task & pleasure of informing you that Clare was safely delivered of a little girl yesterday morning (Sunday, January 12) at four.<sup>1</sup> She sends her affectionate love to you and begs me to say that she is in excellent [*health crossed out*] spirits and as good health as *can be expected*. That is to say that she has had a very favourable time and has now no other illness than the weakness incidental to her case.

A letter ought not to be sent so far without a little more news. The people at present are very quiet waiting anxiously for the meeting of parliament—when in the month of March, as Cobbett boldly prophesies a reform will certainly take place.

For private news if you feel interest in it, Shelley has become intimate with Leigh Hunt and his family. I have seen them & like Hunt extremely. We have also taken a house in Marlow to which we intend to remove in about two months<sup>2</sup>—and where we dare hope to have the pleasure of your society on your return to England. The town of Marlow is about thirty miles from London.

My little boy is very well and is a very lively child.

It is a long time since Shelley has heard from you and I am sure nothing would give him greater pleasure than to receive news of your motions & enjoyments.

Another incident has also occurred which will surprise you, perhaps.<sup>3</sup> It is a little piece of egotism in me to mention it—but it allows me to sign myself—in assuring you of my esteem & sincere friendship

Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: To the Right Honourable/ Lord Byron/ M. Heutsch-Banquier/ Genève/ Switzerland. POSTMARKS: (1) E/ PAID/ 18 JA 18/ 1817 (2) F <sup>18</sup> 17

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 31–32. TEXT: From original letter.

24. *To Leigh Hunt*

Marlow, March 2—1817

Dear Hunt

Shelley & Peacock have started a question which I do not esteem myself wise enough to decide upon—and yet as they seem determined to act on it I

<sup>1</sup> The child (by Byron) was called Alba until May, 1818, when she was turned over to Byron, who changed the name to Allegra.

<sup>2</sup> They went to Marlow in the last week of February and finally moved into their own house on March 18.

<sup>3</sup> The "incident" was her marriage to Shelley on December 30, 1816, at St. Mildred's Church, London.

wish them to have the *best advise*. As a prelude to this you must be reminded that Ham[p]den was of Bucks and our two worthies want to be his successors for which reason they intend to refuse to pay the taxes as illegally imposed— What effect will this have & ought they to do it is the question? Pray let me know your opinion.

Our house is very political as well as poetical and I hope you will acquire a fresh spirit for both when you come here. You will have plenty of room to indulge yourself in and a garden which will deserve your praise when you see it—flowers—trees & shady banks—ought we not to be happy and so indeed we are in spite of the Lord Chancellor and the suspension act.<sup>1</sup> But I can assure you we hope for a great addition to it when you are so kind as to come to us. By the bye could you not come down with Shelley and stay only a day or two—just to view your future abode— It would give me great delight to see you—and I think the *tout ensemble* would give you some pleasure But for all this I know you will not come—but if one or two would—Mrs. Hunt for instance would lose her headach I am quite certain in three minutes—

I have not yet seen the Examiner but when I do I shall judge if you have been disturbed since we left you— The present state of affairs is sufficient to rouse any one I should suppose except (as I wish to be contemptuous) a weekly politician— This however as I have not seen your paper is rather cats' play—if you have been *good* it will pass off very well but if you have not I shall be very sorry but I send it depending that you have pleased yourself this week.

We will hasten every thing to have you down and you shall be indulged in sophas' hair brushes & hair brushers to your hearts content but then in return you & Mrs. Hunt must leave off calling me Mrs. S[helley] for I do not half like the name.<sup>2</sup>

Remember us all with kindness & believe me

Your very sincere friend

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] Let me know if you have been at peace since our departure—and if you all have taken advantage of these fine days to improve your health & spirits by exercise. S[helley] has been very well. In one of the parcels will you send down the hair that you have got for me—

Do you know if you could get in town a small ivory casket in which I could put those memorials—

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Vale of Health/ Hampstead. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2734); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 31–34. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> Lord Chancellor Eldon, before whom the case concerning the custody of Ianthe and Charles Shelley was tried on January 24, at which time Shelley was not very hopeful of success. Lord Eldon read his decision, against Shelley, on March 17. The Suspension Act (suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act) was in consequence of the breaking of "the windows of the state-carriage in which the Prince Regent returned from opening Parliament."—Dowden, II, 108.

<sup>2</sup> That is, "I prefer the more intimate 'Mary.'" On June 14, 1831, she wrote to Trelawny: "... do you think that I shall marry? Never ... Mary Shelley shall be written on my tomb,—

## 25. To Marianne Hunt

Marlow, March 2nd 1817

My dear Mrs. Hunt

It is said that our days for letter writing fade as we grow older (and I, you know, am an old woman) and for some time I felt it so myself—but I know not how it is but ever since I have left you I think I could write 'till day long and wish to hear as often from you all— I wish at one time to describe our house to you but that is useless as you will soon see it— It is indeed a delightful place very fit for the luxurious literati who enjoy a good library—a beautiful garden and a delightful country surrounding it—

But I meant this to be a letter of business as there are two or three things that I am impertinent enough to imagine your kindness warrants my asking you to do for me.

First—If you have not sent my clothes do not wait for Shelleys departure but let me have them without delay.

Secondly—Will you take the trouble to furnish me with a little stock of haberdashery as I cannot well get it here— This includes—a quantity of White Chapel needles—balls of cotton of all sizes tapes—some black sewing silk and silk of other colours—pins—a pair of large and one of smaller scizars and any other article of the same nature that you may deem necessary Will you also get from Clare all the clothes she has got of Wills

And now tell me how your headaches are and if any thing has disturbed you since our departure— If nothing *new* has happened—pray remember—sufficient for the day is the evil thereof—and do not disturb yourself by prognostics— This may be a difficult but I believe it to [be] an attainable art and surely it is very desirable— Believe me, my poor Mary Anne, all your fears and sorrows shall fly when you behold the blue skies & bright sun of Marlow—and feel its gentle breezes (not *winds*) on your cheeks— We enjoy in this town a most delightful climate—and rivers—woods and flowering fields make no contemptible appendage to a bright sky.

How does Clare go on—is she content and happy—and is her babe thriving. My Willy is cutting some more teeth which occasions a little fretting but upon the whole he goes on very well.

Give my love to Miss K[ent]<sup>1</sup> & the Children.

Affectionately yours

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] Will you be so kind as to enclose in your next letter a paper of accounts that I gave you to take care of for me.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Hunt/ Vale of Health/ Hampstead. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2735); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Letters*, 29–31. TEXT: From original letter.

and why? I cannot tell, except that it is so pretty a name that though I were to preach to myself for years, I never should have the heart to get rid of it."

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Kent, Mrs. Hunt's sister.

We do not mean to take Marlow servants— Can you contrive that S[helley]<sup>2</sup> should see some while in London

## 26. To Leigh Hunt

March 5th 1817.

Marlow. 1. o'clock

My dear Hunt

Although you mistook me in thinking that I wished you to write about politics in your letters to me—as such a thought was in fact far from me, yet I cannot help mentioning your last weeks Examiner, as its boldness gave me extreme pleasure. I am very glad to find that you wrote the leading article which I had doubted as there was no significant hand.<sup>1</sup> But though I speak of this do not fear that you will be teased by *me* on these subjects when we enjoy your company at Marlow. When there, you shall never be serious when you wish to be merry; and have as many nuts to crack as there are words in the petitions to parliament for reform.<sup>2</sup> A tremendous promise.

Have you never felt in your succession of nervous feelings one single disagreeable truism gain a painful possession of your mind and keep it for some months. A year ago, I remember my private hours were all made bitter by reflections on the certainty of death—and now the flight of time has the same power over me. Every thing passes and one is hardly con[s]cious of enjoying the present before it becomes the past. I was reading the other day the letters of Gibbon. He entreats Lord Sheffield to come with all his family to visit him at Lausanne & dwells on the pleasure such a visit will occasion. There is a little gap in the date of his letters and then he complains that his solitude is made more irksome by their having been there and departed. So will it be with us in a few months when you will all have left Marlow. But I will not indulge this gloomy feeling. The sun shines brightly—and we shall be very happy in our garden this summer.

Do you know that I am wicked enough to wish to run away from this place and to come to Ham[p]stead untill Saturday—as our furniture does not arrive untill then & Mrs. Peacock is not so bright or agreeable a companion as my poor dear Mary Anne and to tell you a little truth I do not like Peacock a millionth part so well as I do you.<sup>3</sup> But this freak must not extend further than my fancy—the conversations I should promise myself must dwindle into letters and the

<sup>2</sup> Printed "I" in *Letters of Mary W. Shelley* [to Leigh and Marianne Hunt], with Introduction and Notes by Henry H. Harper (Boston, Printed only for Members of the Bibliophile Society, 1918).

<sup>1</sup> "The number for Feb. 23—leading article was on 'Friends of Revolution—Taxation.'"—Dowden's MS note in his copy of *Shelley and Mary*, I, 194.

<sup>2</sup> Such petitions were especially numerous in 1817. H. Buxton Forman's Introduction to the Shelley Society edition of *A Proposal For Putting Reform to the Vote* (1887) shows clearly the widespread agitation for reform and especially how this was reflected in Hunt's *Examiner*, which Mary and Shelley read carefully every week.

<sup>3</sup> The Shelleys lived with Peacock and his mother until their own house, Albion House, was ready on March 18.

music will be disipated long before it reaches me—this being an Irisheism—and as it is I will put bye my writing untill I am in a merrier mood more according with yours. For I had a dream tonight of the dead being alive which has affected my spirits.

8 oclock P.M.

I send this letter in a parcel to Clare containing her music—among which there are two or three songs that I should like you to learn—the Rantz des Vaches—and the Macellois [Marseillaise] hymn with the french words which Clare will teach you to pronou[nce] if necessary. Now do not think this im[pertinent] in me—for it is taken from your own report as I never heard you speak two words of french in my life. But when I see you for convenience sake you must either learn that or I italian that we may not always shock one another with our vernacular tongue A thing Moliere's philosopher could not endure.

I suppose you have not been to the opera. Peacock will be disappointed by the alteration this week as he wished very much to see Figaro. When a child I used to like going to the play exceedingly, and more from association than any thing else I liked it afterwards: but I went seldom principally from feeling the delight I once felt wearing out—but this last winter it has been renewed—and I again look forward to going to the theatre as a great treat quite exquisite enough, as of old, to take away my appetite for dinner. A play, in fact, is nothing unless you have people you like with you, & then it is an exquisite pleasure.

Take care of yourself— Give my love to Miss K[ent] & tell her to be good & I will love her.

Adieu—Be not very angry with us for being such new friends—for I like you too well to wish you [to] forget me—or to be other than as I am

Affectionately yours

Marina<sup>4</sup>

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2737); A.L. (signed "Marina"), 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 112–13; *Shelley and Mary*, I, 194–95 (first half only); Dowden, II, 112 (quot., 3 lines); Marshall, I, 183–84 (incomplete); *Letters*, 36–40. TEXT: From original letter.

## 27. To Marianne Hunt

March 5 1817

Marlow

My dear Mrs. Hunt

I have received the parcel & your very kind letter this evening—and I thank [you] for the latter a thousand times. All my clothes however—are not come; no gowns being in the parcel which I want very much. But I suppose they will come by Shelley.

A spencer that fits Mary<sup>1</sup> would I think just do for Will. I wish it to button

<sup>4</sup> Hunt's pet name for Mary.

<sup>1</sup> Mary Florimel Leigh Hunt, Mrs. Hunt's child.

behind. I would rather also that it should be crimson as that soils less than scarlet.

I have written a long letter to Hunt & as you and he are one and as my affection for you both is I believe pretty nearly equal (if you will not be jealous) perhaps you will excuse a long letter as I am rather prest for time—not but that I have plenty to say.

But I must not forget to praise my good girl for her resolutions & exhort her to fortify them by every forcible argument I know of. And indeed to see or know of the content & pleasure Hunt feels when you & Bessy<sup>2</sup> agree must be enough to make you *appear* so at least especially as with Hunt every symptom of generosity touches him deeply when any thing that looks (in his opinion) towards the other side of the question makes him angry—cultivate his affection & cherish & enjoy his society & I am sure my dear Mary Anne will find her prospects clear very sensibly.

Our furniture will arrive saturday morning and if Hunt will let me use a selfish argument you would be very *useful* to me. But upon second thoughts do not let him see this ugly sentence as your greatest use must be towards him—& besides he does not like being teased—

William is very well— How is your little one after being weaned— Give my love to all the children.

Do not fear Hunt's boldness— I do not think that that does any harm if he steers clear of societies & libels and what he says is not libelous certainly.

I am glad to hear of the health of Clare's babe—poor girl she *must* be lonely—

Shelley mentions Mrs. G[odwin]'s favour is she not an odious woman.

I hope we shall see you very soon and this air will certainly drive away all headaches

Your affectionate friend

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] I wrote to Shelley today if he had departed before the letter arrived burn it

ADDRESS: Mrs. Hunt. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2736); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 34–36. TEXT: From original letter.

## 28. To Leigh and Marianne Hunt

Marlow, March 18—1817

My dear Friend

We have not received any letter from you but have heard from Clare that your friend, Mr. Horace Smith<sup>1</sup> is ill I hope however than [that] when you receive this you will find him so far restored as to free you from anxiety. The

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Kent, Mrs. Hunt's sister, usually called Bessy.

<sup>1</sup> Horace Smith, with whom Shelley became acquainted about this time, through Hunt, was to be one of Shelley's staunchest friends.

Examiner of this week, also says a great deal for you— I am glad to see you write much and well as it shews that your mind is at peace. I am now writing in the Library of our house in which we are to sleep tonight for the first time— It is very comfortable & expectant of its promised guests. The statues are arrived and every thing is getting on. Come then, dear, good creatures, and let us enjoy with you the beauty of the Marlow sun and the pleasant walks that will give you all health spirits & *industry*.

Hogg is at present a visitor of Peacock. I do not like him and I think he is more disagreeable than ever. I would not have him come every week to disturb our peace by his ill humour and noise for all the w[orld.] Both of the menagerie<sup>2</sup> were very much scandalized by the praise & sonnet of Keats<sup>8</sup> and mean I believe to petition against the publication of any more. It was transferred to the Chronicle— Is that an honour?

I have a word or two to say to Mrs. Hunt & not having any more paper in the house tonight & it being too late to get more I must with this country excuse cut short my letter to you— Write & if you wish it you shall have a long answer—

Your affectionate Friend

Marina

[P.S.] It is very impertinent to give the lady the last place but I did not know how little paper I had when I began

My dear Mary Anne—

My little red box is not yet arrived & I am in agony— I hope it is sent if not pray send it with the rest of the things mentioned in the list. What about a servant— If you get one let her be a *good cook* for I think we must have two and I can easily get a housemaid Do not entirely agree with one untill you let me know.

Have you given Clare Lord B[yron]'s letters yet—she mentions that you had not in a letter we had from her today they will give her so much pleasure.

William is very well & can now walk alone, but I am afraid his teeth will put him back again—how is Swynburne<sup>4</sup> and the rest of your babies—kiss them for me and give my love to Miss Kent.

I hope Hunt will criticise Melincourt<sup>5</sup> next week. Have you been to see Cymbeline or the opera—

Take care of yourself, my dear girl, I long to see you all down here & hope,

<sup>2</sup> Mary first wrote, "Both of these wise ones."

<sup>3</sup> "Written on a Blank Space at the End of Chaucer's Tale of 'The Floure and the Lefe.'" Printed in the *Examiner* for March 16, it was preceded by Hunt's comment: "The following exquisite Sonnet, as well as one or two others that have lately appeared under the same signature, is from the pen of the young poet (Keats), who was mentioned not long since in this paper, and who may already lay true claim to that title: The youngest he/ That sits in shadow of Apollo's tree."

<sup>4</sup> Son of Leigh and Marianne Hunt; often called Swinny (d. 1827).

<sup>5</sup> A novel by Thomas Love Peacock. It was published late in February or early in March, 1817, in three volumes. No reviews of it appeared in the *Examiner* in 1817.

Mary W. Shelley

MAY 29, 1817 : 29

for Hunts sake, that we shall by that time have received the long withheld hairbrush

Most affectionately ys.

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] Shelley sends his love to you all

ADDRESS: (In Shelley's hand) Leigh Hunt Esq/ Vale of Health/ Hampstead.  
POSTMARK: 4 o'Clock/ MR. 19/ 1817 EV. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2738); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 40–43. TEXT: From original letter.

## 29. To Shelley

Skinner Street,<sup>1</sup>

May 29th, 1817

My best Love

I have not heard from you today nor indeed since you left me—nor did I write last night for in some way I entirely forgot all about writing untill it was too late.

We have bad weather now but it was fine during your voyage with south-east winds; you are now arrived & I hope safe under covert with your pretty Will man whom kiss a million of times for me Saturday I shall kiss him myself.

Papa is not in very good spirits the money affairs are at a stand— I wish I could see him happy; he is full of care and I fear that there is no way to relieve this. I suppose you have [heard] nothing more of the proposal made to Longdill<sup>2</sup>

I have been once to the play to see Kean in *Barbarossa*<sup>3</sup> tuesday night but otherwise I have been at home. Yesterday evening Papa supped with Hazlitt at Dr. Walcotts<sup>4</sup> and I amused myself with reading the 3rd Canto of *Childe Harold*.<sup>5</sup> It made me dreadfully melancholy— The lake—the mountains and the faces associated with these scenes passed before me— Why is not life a continued moment where hours and days are not counted—but as it is a suc-

<sup>1</sup> On May 14 Mary put the finishing touches to *Frankenstein* and then went to London on the twenty-second to see about its publication. She stayed at Godwin's house. The novel was first offered to John Murray (Albemarle Street), who refused it. Shelley, who accompanied Mary to London, returned on the twenty-sixth. Mary returned on the thirty-first. Mrs. Hunt was at the Marlow house during Mary's absence.

<sup>2</sup> P. W. Longdill, Shelley's attorney, who attempted unsuccessfully to become the legally appointed guardian of Shelley's children, Ianthe and Charles, finally denied Shelley by the Lord Chancellor's judgment of March 17, 1817.

<sup>3</sup> A tragedy by John Brown, D. D. (1715–66), vicar of Newcastle; acted at Drury Lane theater December 17, 1754. It was revived in the nineteenth century, being acted at Covent Garden in 1804 and at Drury Lane in 1817. First printed in 1755, it went through several editions. (Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Late Eighteenth Century Drama* [Cambridge, The University Press, 1927], 82, 240.)

<sup>4</sup> William Hazlitt (1778–1830). John Wolcott, M.D. (1738–1819), satirist and poet.

<sup>5</sup> Finished in Switzerland in July, 1816, while the Shelleys were intimately associated with Byron, and published late in the same year. Shelley had brought the MS to England in September, 1816, with instructions to read the proof. But Byron had sent Murray another copy, and though Shelley insisted upon seeing the proof, it is not certain that Murray ever allowed him to do so.



cession of events happen—the moment of enjoyment lives only in memory and when we die where are we?

Manfred<sup>6</sup> is advertized— I long to see it if the weather is tolerable I shall call in Albemarle St. before I return and if possible see Murray and ask a question or two about our faithless Albe<sup>7</sup> but do not say a word of this [to Claire] as I may learn nothing or worse.

Of course Gifford<sup>8</sup> did not allow this courtly bookseller to purchase F[rankenstein]. I have no hope on that score but then I have nothing to fear.

I am very well here but so intolerably restless that it [is] painful to sit still for five minutes—

Pray write— I hear so little from Marlow that I can hardly believe that you and Will man live there

Give my love to such of my guests as care about it—to Clara and Miss Alba Tell Elise I shall buy clothes for Aimée<sup>9</sup> and that I hope she has been a good girl.

Adieu dearest— Welcome me with smiles and health

Your affectionate

Pecksie

[P.S.] Send Charles's<sup>10</sup> letter— I will not close this letter just yet that if I feel in better spirits after dinner I may say so.

Good bye pretty one— I smile now and shall again when I see you Saturday

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley Esq/ Grt. Marlow/ Bucks. POSTMARK: MY/ 29/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.215–16; folio 193 is a "poor and imperfect copy"); A.L. (signed "Pecksie"), 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 203–204; Dowden, II, 117–18; Marshall, I, 191 (quot., 4 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

### 30. Shelley to Leigh and Marianne Hunt

Great Marlow,

June 29, 1817.

[*Added by Mary:*] You may see by this letter that Shelley is very unwell—he always writes in this manner when ill. He was well yesterday until the evening, but today he is worse than I have known him for some time. Perhaps the decrease of heat in the weather has to do with it.

The babes are all well. John has been a very good boy, and Mary better within the last day or two. Swynburne is quite well.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>6</sup> *Manfred*, begun in Switzerland and completed at Venice, was published on June 16, 1817.

<sup>7</sup> Albe was the Shelleys' name for Byron.

<sup>8</sup> William Gifford, editor of *The Quarterly Review*, published by John Murray.

<sup>9</sup> Elise was the nurse brought from Geneva in 1816. She continued in their service until early in 1819, leaving them at Naples. Aimée was Elise's little girl (in Switzerland), as Mary's letter of April [6–8], 1820, to the Hunts, makes clear. Dowden's conjecture (II, 118) that *Allegra* (or Alba) is intended is incorrect.

<sup>10</sup> Charles Clairmont, son of Mrs. Godwin by her first husband, and brother to Claire.

<sup>1</sup> These are Hunt's children, who, with Bessy Kent to look after them, were visiting the Shelleys. Thornton is Hunt's oldest child.

What about the Alpha Cottage? It is dear and I should think too far from the theatres, is there another choice?

Please Mary Anne send flannel for petticoats and flannels, and a pattern of the latter, and lawn not too expensive with a pattern shirt and cap.

The statues are not of a snowy but of a milky whiteness, but I think begin to look more creamy today.

Miss Kent is very attentive to the children. She bids me tell you that they are well, and that she does not write today.

How do you like Canova—one of you write and tell me a little news of yourselves.

You know the news we have had concerning the little faithless [Albé; i.e., Byron] Clare is of course unhappy and consequently cross or so. I do not wonder that she should be unhappy. I suppose she [he; Byron] is over head and ears in love with some Venetian. Give our love to Thornton.

Adieu, little babes.— Take care not to loose one another in the streets for fear one of you should be kidnapped, but take hold of one another's hands and walk pretty.

Affectionately yours,

M. W. S.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esq.,/ J. Hunt, Esq.,/ Maida Vale, Paddington,/ London. POSTMARK: 10 o'Clock/ JY. 1/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Carl H. Pforzheimer, New York. PRINTED: Julian edition, IX, 229–30. TEXT: From Julian edition.

### 31. *To Marianne Hunt*

Marlow

August 6—1817<sup>1</sup>

My dear Marianne

In writing your congratulations to Shelley on his birthday did not your naughty heart smite you with remorse—did you not promise to look at some broaches and send me the descriptions and prices—but the 4th of August arrived and I had no present—

I am exceedingly obliged to you for the loan of the caps—but a nurse—I have a great aversion to the having a Marlow woman—but I must be provided by the 20th. What am I to do—I dare say Mrs. Lucas is out at present but she may be disengaged by that time.<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry to observe by your letter that you are in low spirits—cheer up my dear little girl—and resolve to be happy—let me know how it is with you

<sup>1</sup> Dated the sixteenth in all printed versions. That the sixth is correct is shown clearly by the contents of the letter, Shelley's letter of August 3, and the reference to Longdill's letter (received "this morning") announcing "the decision of the Master of Chancery." Longdill's letter is dated the fifth. See Lady [Jane] Shelley (ed.), *Shelley Memorials* (London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1859), 75–76; and R. H. Hill (ed.), *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, Printed for the Bodleian Library, 1926), 12. The original MS shows that Mary altered the date hastily, leaving what at first glance appears to be the sixteenth.

<sup>2</sup> Mary was making preparations for the birth of her child, Clara, who was born on September 2.

and how your health is as your time advances— If it were of any use I would say a word or two against your continuing to wear stays—such confinement cannot be either good for you or the child—and as to shape I am sure they are very far from becoming.<sup>8</sup>

We are all well here—our dog who is a malicious beast whom we intend to send away has again bitten poor little Will-man without any provocation for I was with him and he went up to him to stroke his face when the dog snapped at his fingers. Miss Alba is perfectly well & thriving—she crows like a little cock although (as Shelley bids me say) she is a hen—

Our sensations of indignation have been a little excited this morning by the decision of the Master of Chancery<sup>4</sup>— He says the children are to go to this old clergyman in Warwickshire who is to stand instead of a parent—and [*sic*] old fellow who no one knows and [who] never saw the children this is somewhat beyond credibility did we not see it in black & white— Longdill is very angry that his proposition is rejected and means to appeal from the Master to the Lord Chancellor

I cannot find the sheet of Mrs. J. H. I send you two or three things of yours—the stone crop and the soap dish must wait untill some one goes up to town

I am afraid Hunt takes no exercise or he would not be so ill— I see however that you go to the play tolerably often— How are you amused—

The gown must not be dear—but you are as good a judge as I of what to give Milly<sup>5</sup> as a kind of present from Miss Clifford's mamma for the trouble she has had—

Longdill thought £100 per ann. sufficient for both Shelley's children to provide them with clothes and every thing— Why then should we pay £70 for A.<sup>6</sup>

The country is very pleasant just now—but I see nothing of it beyond the garden— I am ennuied as you may easily imagine from want of exercise which I cannot take— The cold bath is of great benefit to me— By the bye what are we to do with it—have you a place for its reception— It is of such use to H[unt]'s health that you ought not to be without it—we can easily get

<sup>8</sup> Strange as it may seem, it is very difficult to get exact information on most of Hunt's children. Even the number of them is vague. I have counted ten. Which child Mrs. Hunt was shortly to give birth to in 1817, I do not know; Percy is the most likely one.

<sup>4</sup> After Lord Eldon's judgment of March 27 had declared Shelley ineligible to bring up his own children, it became the duty of the Master of Chancery to select a suitable person to undertake that duty. The Westbrooks chose the Reverend John Kendall, schoolmaster of Warwick, with whom the children were living at that time. He was quite unknown to Shelley, who chose Longdill, his solicitor. The Master's report of August 1 was in favor of the Reverend Kendall, Longdill being rejected because of his connection with Shelley. Shelley appealed to the Lord Chancellor. Eventually Shelley's second choice, Dr. and Mrs. Hume of Brent End, Hansell, were appointed. They undertook their duties for an annual fee of £100 per child. The business reached this final stage on July 25, 1818, while Shelley was in Italy. (See Dowden, II, 91-94).

<sup>5</sup> Amelia Shields, a Marlow girl who remained in the Shelleys' service until December, 1819. "Miss Clifford's mamma" I cannot identify.

<sup>6</sup> Probably Alba (Allegra). Shelley and Mary had contemplated placing Claire's child Alba under the care of two respectable ladies of Marlow (Dowden, II, 142). Alba's presence was a constant embarrassment, especially to Mary.

another— If you should chance to hear of any very amusing book send it in the parcel if you can borrow it from Ollier<sup>7</sup>

Adieu—take care of yourself and do not be dispirited— All will be well one day I do not doubt—

I send you £3—

Shelley sends his love to you all and thanks for your good wishes and promised present—pray when is this intended parcel to come—

Affectionately Ys.

M W S.

[P. S. by Shelley] I will write to Hunt tomorrow or the day after—meanwhile kindest remembrances to all, & thanks for your dreams in my favour.—Your incantations have not been *quite* powerful enough to expel evil from all revolutions of time. Poor Mary's book came back with a refusal,<sup>8</sup> which has put me rather in ill spirits. Does any kind friend of yours Marianne know any bookseller or has any influence with one? Any of those good tempered Robinsons? All these things are affairs of interest & preconception.—

You have seen Clarke about this loan. Well, is there any proposal, anything in bodily shape? My signature makes any security in fact infallible tho not in law.—even if they would not take Hunts.—I shall have more to say on this—the while—

Your faithful friend

P B S.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Hunt. ORIGINAL: Luther A. Brewer Collection, University of Iowa; A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, (7½ by 9 inches). (P.S. by Shelley on page 4.)  
PRINTED: *Letters from P. B. Shelley to Leigh Hunt*, edited by Wise, I, 19–23;  
*Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century*, (1895), edited by Nicoll and Wise, I, 333–35; Julian edition, IX, 238–39. TEXT: From original letter.

## 32. To Shelley

[Marlow, September 24, 1817]<sup>1</sup>

You tell me, dearest, to write you long letters but I do not know whether I can today as I am rather tired—my spirits however are much better than they were—and perhaps your absence is the cause—ah! my love you cannot guess how wretched it was to see your languour and encreasing illness. I now say to myself perhaps he is better—but then I watched you every moment & every moment was full of pain both to you and to me— Write my love, a long account of what Lawrence says<sup>2</sup>— I shall be very anxious untill I hear.

<sup>7</sup> Charles Ollier, Shelley's publisher.

<sup>8</sup> *Frankenstein*. It was refused by Charles Ollier.

<sup>1</sup> Dated the twenty-fifth in all previously printed copies, but the letter was written on the twenty-fourth and posted on the twenty-fifth.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's health was so bad in 1817 that he considered *The Revolt of Islam* to be the utterances of a dying man. On the twenty-third he and Claire went to London, Shelley to place the completed poem in the publisher's hands and to consult with Dr. William Lawrence. The doctor advised a change of scene and air. Shelley gave Mary the duty of choosing between Italy and a seaside house in England. The Hunts returned to London on the twenty-fifth. (Dowden, II, 141–42.)

I do not see a great deal of our guests—they rise late and walk all the morning— This is something like a contrary fit of Hunt's, for I meant to walk today & said so but they left me and I hardly wish to take my first walk [i.e. after Clara's birth] by myself—however I must tomorrow if he shews the same want of *tact*. Peacock dines here every day uninvited to drink his bottle I have not seen him—he morally disgusts me and Marianne says that he is very ill tempered

I was much pained last night to hear from Mr. B[axter] that Mr. Booth is ill tempered and *jealous* towards Isabell—and Mr. B[axter] thinks that she half repents her marriage—so she is to [be] another victim of that ceremony—Mr. B[axter] is not at all pleased with his son in law but we can talk of that when we meet<sup>3</sup>—

Pray, dearest, come back in better health looking cheerful & pleased with me & your two pretty babes— Alba is quite well Did you take the Examiner away with you—if you did send it back—tell me also what money you took and if you took £1 from my table—

A letter came from Godwin today—very short— You will see him tell me how he is— You are loaded with business the event of most of which I am very anxious to learn and none so much as whether you can do any thing for my father—

If you have not time—or what I fear are too languid to write let Clare & tell her what news you have— I sent a parcel yesterday—if you have not received it you had better send to the White H[orse] Cel[lar] for it.

I will write before dinner tomorrow and a longer letter

Adieu my own one—come back as quickly as you may—with bright eyes and stout limbs

Had I not better in future direct my letters to Longdills of [or] Skinner St. as they arrive so late at Paddington.

Your own  
M

ADDRESS: P. B. Shelley Esq—/ L. Hunt Esq—/ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington— London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) 10 o'clock/ SP. 25/ 1817 (3) C/ 25 SP 25/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.214); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 222–23; Dowden, II, 141–42; Marshall, I, 200–201. TEXT: From original letter.

### 33. To Shelley

[Marlow, September 24, 1817]

Dont let Clare come down on my account as Mr. B[axter] is here

<sup>3</sup> When Mr. Baxter of Dundee visited the Shelleys in September, 1817, he was most favorably impressed with Shelley's character and poetry and wrote to advise his daughter Isabel that she ought to renew her friendship with Mary. Isabel was quite willing, and probably would have accepted Mary's invitation to accompany them to Italy. But her husband, Mr. David Booth, again forbade any kind of intercourse with the Shelleys; nor was he softened by a personal interview with Shelley when he and Mr. Baxter had tea with Shelley on November 13. Mr. Baxter's letter of December 29 ended Mary's hopes (during Shelley's lifetime) of any renewal of her old friendship. (See Dowden, II, 173–78, and Letter 4, note 1.)

I send you my dearest another proof<sup>4</sup>—which arrived tonight in looking it over there appeared to me some abruptnesses which I have endeavoured to supply—but I am tired and not very clear headed so I give you *carte blanche* to make what alterations you please

I wrote today by the post— My love to Clare the babes are all very well The Hunts go up tomorrow they say— Will C[lare] come down or not Goodnight dearest & best—be well & I am happy

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.217–18); A.L. (unsigned), 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 15. TEXT: From original letter.

### 34. To Shelley\*

Marlow,

Sept. 26, 1817.

You tell me to decide between Italy and the sea— I think—dearest—if, what you do not seem to doubt but which I do a little, our finances are in sufficiently good a state to bear the expence of the journey—our inclination ought to decide— I feel some reluctance at quitting our present settled state but as we *must* leave Marlow I do not know that stopping short on this side of the channel would be pleasanter to me than crossing it. At any rate, my love, do not let us encumber ourselves with a lease again. However consult in your own mind and say frankly in your next, if your feelings are decided enough on the subject—if Italy would not give you far more pleasure than a settlement on the coast of Kent— If it would say so & so be it— Perhaps A[lba] renders the thought of expence pretty nearly equal whichever way you decide. Do you glow with the thoughts of a clear sky—pure air & burning sun— You would then enjoy life. For my own part I shall have tolerable health anywhere and for pleasure Italy certainly holds forth a charming prospect— But are we rich enough to enjoy ourselves when there.

I do not get strength so quickly as I could wish. I have finished the bottle of aperient medecine and as I cannot get on at all without it I wish you would write to Furnival<sup>1</sup> for more— I have not been out yet this day was too windy & rainy and indeed the season advances very fast which renders A[lba]'s affairs pressing We must decide to go ourselves or send her within a month.

It is well that your poem<sup>2</sup> was finished before this edict was issued against the imagination—but my pretty eclogue will suffer from it— By the bye talking of authorship do get a sketch of Godwin's plan from him— I do not

<sup>4</sup> Of *Frankenstein*, which, though already in press, was not published by Lackington until March, 1818. This letter was evidently enclosed with the proof. The first parcel of proof was sent on the twenty-third.

<sup>1</sup> Surgeon of Egham, who attended Mary at the birth of Clara. He was the father of Dr. Fredk. J. Furnivall, founder and treasurer of the Shelley Society in 1886.

<sup>2</sup> *The Revolt of Islam*, published by Charles and James Ollier in January, 1818. The eclogue was *Rosalind and Helen*, inspired by Mary's disrupted friendship with Isabel Baxter Booth. Begun at Marlow, but put aside because of Shelley's lack of interest, it was finished in Italy, at the Baths of Lucca, in August, 1818, upon Mary's urgent request, and published by the Olliers in the spring of 1819.

think that I ought to get out of the habit of writing and I think that the thing he talked of would just suit me. I am glad to hear that G[odwin] is well I told you that after what had passed he would be particularly gracious. As to Mrs. G[odwin] som[e]thing very analogous to disgust arises whenever I mention her that last accusation of Godwins adds bitterness to every feeling I ever felt against her.

Send William [young William Godwin] a present of fruit and a little money.— Pray also dearest do get the state of your accounts from your banker—and also (for I might as well pack all my commissions into one paragraph) send my broach down as soon as you can and as your hair is to be in it have a lock ready cut when you go to the jewellers Get your hair cut in London— For any other commission be sure to consult your tablets.

Your babes are quite well but I have had some pain in perceiving or imagining that Willy has almost forgotten me—and seems to like Elise better—but this may be fancy & will certainly disappear when I can get out and about again— Clara is well and gets very pretty. How happy I shall be when my own dear love comes again to kiss me and my babes— As it seems that your health principally depends upon care pray dearest take every possible precaution— I have often observed that rain has a very bad effect upon [you]— if therefore you have rain in London do not go out in it.

Clare told me to send Harry<sup>3</sup> today to Maidenhead to wait for her which I did but she has not come but I suppose I shall receive an explanation by to-morrow's post

Adieu—dearest— Come back as soon as you may and in the meantime write me long long letters—

Your own  
Mary

[P.S.] Mr. B[axter] thinks that Mr. Booth keeps Isabel from writing to me he has written to her today warmly in praise of us both and telling her by all means not to let the acquaintance cool & that in such a case her loss would be much greater than mine. He has taken a prodigious fancy to us and is continually talking of & praising Queen Mab which he vows is the best poem of modern days.

ADDRESS: P. B. Shelley Esq. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.212-13); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 223-25; Dowden, II, 129 (quot., 3 lines), 143-44; Marshall, I, 201. TEXT: From original letter.

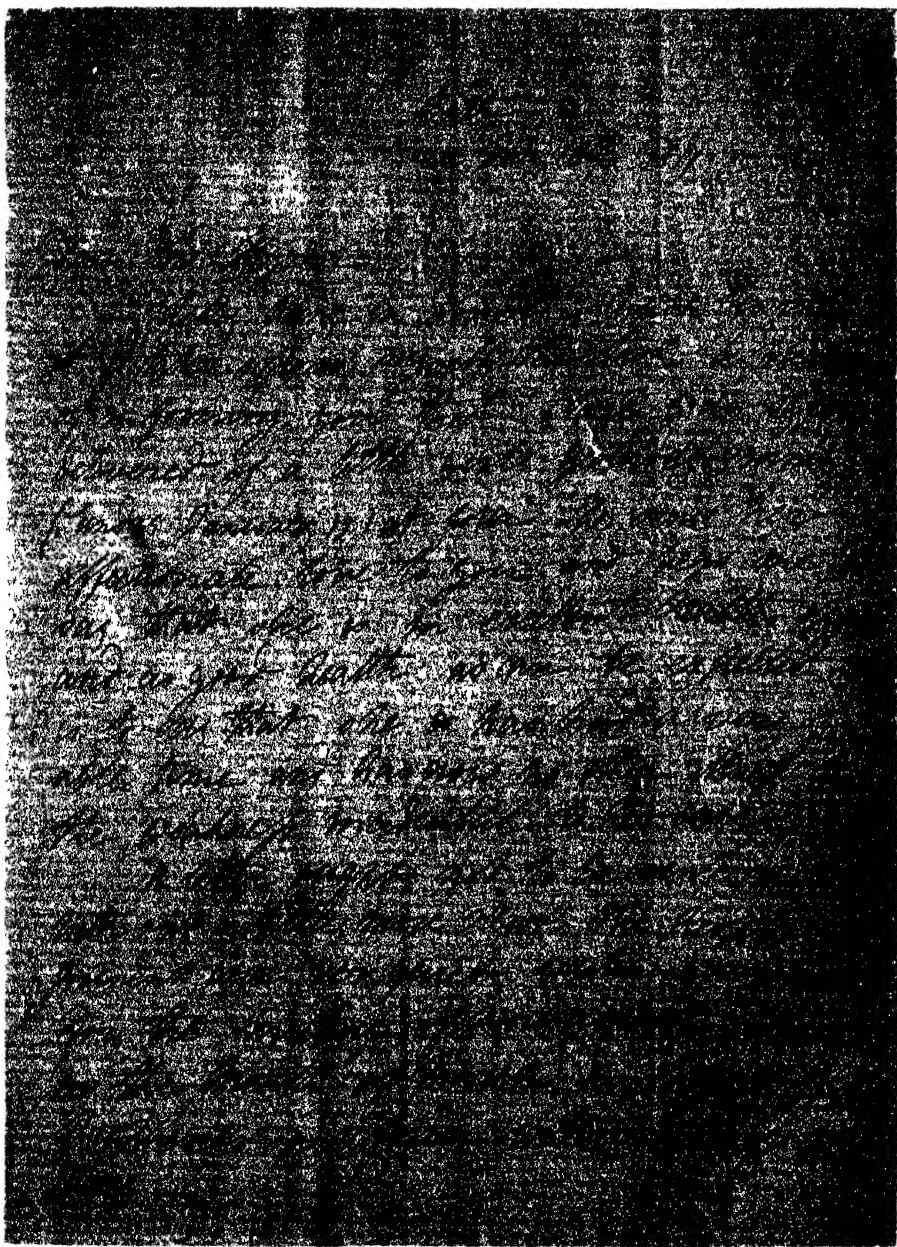
### 35. *To Shelley*

Marlow,  
Sept. 28, 1817

Dearest Love

Clare arrived yesterday night and whether it might be that she was in a

<sup>3</sup> The Shelleys' manservant in Marlow. He kept the garden and did other odd jobs.



Letter 23: to Lord Byron  
January 13, 1817

Reduced one-fourth





I have been thinking of you  
 very much lately and wondering  
 how you are getting on. I hope  
 you are well and happy. I  
 have been very busy lately  
 but I have managed to find  
 some time to write to you.  
 I have been thinking of you  
 very much lately and wondering  
 how you are getting on. I hope  
 you are well and happy. I  
 have been very busy lately  
 but I have managed to find  
 some time to write to you.



croaking humour (in ill spirits she certainly was) or whether she represented things as they really were I know not but certainly affairs did not seem to wear a very good face— She talks of Harriet's debts to a large amount & something about Longdills having undertaken for them so that they must be paid— She mentioned also that you were entering into a post-obit transaction— Now this requires our serious consideration—on one account. These things (post-obits) as you well know, are affairs of wonderful length—and if you must complete one before you settle on going to Italy Alba's departure ought certainly not to [be] delayed. You do not seem enough to feel the absolute necessity there is that she should join her father with every possible speed. Write me a long letter concerning all these things and put the letter into the post *yourself*—be particular in this for Hunt's servant is so neglectful that I did not receive your last letter untill today consequently no one went to Maidenhead to meet Clare and she waited some hours uncomfortably at the Inn by herself untill the Marlow coach came.—

You are teased to death by all kinds of annoying affairs—dearest—how much do I wish that I were with you but that is impossible—but pray in your letters do be explicit and tell me all your plans. You have advertized the house but have you given Maddocks<sup>1</sup> any orders about how to answer the applicants. And have you yet settled for Italy or the Sea—and do you know how to get money to convey us there and to buy the things that will be absolutely necessary before our departure? And can you do any thing for my father before we go? Or after all would it not be as well to inhabit a small house by the sea shore where our expences would be much less than they are at present— You have not mentioned yet to G[odwin] your thoughts of Italy but if you determine soon I would have you do it as those things are always better to be talked of some days before they take place.

I took my first walk today. What a dreadfully cold place this house is— I was shivering over a fire and the garden looked cold and dismal but as soon as I got into the road I found to my infinite surprise that the sun was shining and the air warm and delightful— I wish Willy to be my companion in my future walks—to further which plan will you send down if possible by Monday's coach (and if you go to Longdills it will be very possible—for you can buy it at the corner of Southampton buildings and send it to the coach at the old Bailey) a seal skin fur hat for him it must be a fashionable round shape *for a boy* mention particularly and have a narrow gold riband round it, that it may be taken in if too large; it must measure [blank space] round & let it be rather too large than too small—but exactly the thing would be best— He

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Madocks, of Marlow, managed the sale of the lease on Albion House, took care of some of Shelley's books and other property while Shelley was abroad, and undertook to discharge Shelley's Marlow debts. Shelley ordered his bankers, Brookes & Co., on March 12, 1818, to pay £117 to Mr. Madocks "for accounts at Marlow." There were, however, more debts than Shelley had estimated, and so he became indebted to Mr. Madocks for an appreciable sum. By March, 1820, this debt had not been paid. (See Julian edition, IX, 247, 284; X, 49, 147.)

cannot walk with me untill it comes which makes me in a greater hurry for it—besides if you send it Monday you can enclose a word of news and as there is no post on that day it would be a great comfort to me— Do you call on Longdill every day—if you do had I not better direct my letters there

Tell Marianne to be so kind as to lose no time about my pelisse as I shall want it soon— She had better send it to Thompson's in the Strand where Clare has sent the other. Give my love to these good folks I hope Marianne has now recovered from her imprudent walk of so many hours—for with her hours are of more consequence than miles in her walks.

William is peevish in the house—but happy in the air he is just cutting a double tooth. Clara is very well—but my milk will not come in any quantity to satisfy her— We have sent the ass away for she was far gone with foal and would not give any milk—the little lady takes cows milk—

I will now tell you something that will make you laugh if you are not too teased and ill to laugh at any thing—Ah! dearest—is it so?— You know not how melancholy it makes me sometimes to think how ill & comfortless you may be and I so far away from you— But to my story— In Elise's last letter to her *chère amie* Clare put in that Mad[a]me Clairmont was very ill so that her life was in danger and added in Elise's person that she (Elise) was somewhat shocked to perceive that Mademoiselle Clairmont's gaiety was not abated by the *douloureuse* situation of her amiable sister<sup>2</sup>— Jenny replies— “Mon aime, avec quel chagrin j'apprends la maladie de cette jolie et amiable Mad[a]me Clairmont; pauvre, chère dame comme je la plains— Sans doute elle aime tendrement son mari et en être séparée pour toujours—en avoir la certitude et le sentir— quelle cruelle chose—qu'il doit être un méchant homme pour quitter sa femme—je ne sais ce qu'il y a mais cette jolie et jeune femme me tient singulièrement au cœur; je l'avoue que je n'aime point Madlle sa sœur—Comment!! avoir a craindre pour les jours d'une si charmante sœur et n'en pas perdre un grain de gaîté—elle me met en colère.”

Here is noble resentment thrown away—really I think this *mystification* of Clare's a little wicked although laughable.

I am just now surrounded by babes Alba is scratching and crowing—William amusing himself with wrapping a shawl round him and Miss Clara staring at the fire. It is now only four o'clock so I shall put bye my letter for the present to finish it after dinner— Adieu—dear love— I cannot express to you how anxious I am to hear from [you of] your health—affairs & plans.

½ past Seven. I have waited untill the last minute that I might learn from

<sup>2</sup> A joke on Claire's two identities as Miss and Mrs. (or Madame) Clairmont. In Geneva (where Jenny lived) she had been known as Madame Clairmont; in Bath and Marlow she also was known as Mrs. Clairmont. Claire may have meant by this joke that her role as a married woman was about to be dropped. They had talked of putting Alba in the care of some responsible person. If this were done, it would not be necessary for her to keep up the pretense of being married.

Maddocks some news of the next house but he is out and I cannot— However I will tomorrow.

I do not think that the cows milk agrees well with Clara as she has been disordered ever since she took it. Furnival mentioned that he could get an ass Think about this & write about it to him if you think it right.

Clare wants her box sent down by the first conveyance. She sends her love to you and in proper gradations to the rest of the folks at 13 Lisson Grove<sup>3</sup> Has virtue deserted them?

Perhaps you had better not get William's hat as it may not fit him or please me.

Now pray, dearest—dearest love write me a long letter tell me that this absence does not make you wretched but that you keep up your spirits—tell me what you have decided on and what your difficulties are

I think you took up my journal of our first travels with you<sup>4</sup> if you did tell me if you have done any thing with it or if you have any prospect—if you have I will go on instantly with the letters

Adieu dearest love I want to say again that you may fully answer me how very *very* anxious I am to know the whole extent of your present difficulties & pursuits and remember also that if the this [*sic*] post-obit is to be a long business Alba must go before it is finished

Willy is just going to bed— When I ask him where you are he makes me a long speech that I do not understand—but I know my own one that you are away and I wish that you were with me— Come soon my own—only love

Your affectionate girl,  
M W S.

[P.S.] What of Frankenstein? and your own poem—have you fixed on a name<sup>5</sup>

Give my love to Godwin—when Mrs. G[odwin] is not by or you must give it to her too and I do not *love* her. Did Marianne get a parcel sent Saturday to Maiden Lane—

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley Esq/ Leigh Hunt Esq/ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) SP. 29/1817 (3) C/ 29 SP 29/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.206–207, 210–11); A.L.S., 7 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 226–29; Dowden, II, 144–45 (about half); Marshall, I, 201–203 (about half). TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> Where the Hunts lived.

<sup>4</sup> Published in December, 1817, by Thos. Hookham and C. & J. Ollier as a *History of a Six Weeks Tour, &c.* In August, Mary had transcribed her journal of the 1814 tour; the MS was completed in October.

<sup>5</sup> The poem was first named *Laon and Cythna* and was actually printed with that title; but after Shelley made the few changes insisted upon by Ollier, the poem was finally published in January, 1818, as *The Revolt of Islam*.

## 36. To Shelley

Marlow,  
Sept. 30th, 1817

You will have received, my dearest—an answer to most of your questions in the two letters you have seen of mine since the one that has arrived today from you. We must make our decision instantly. Let us, past all doubt quit this house— You have no conception of how cold it is— As the winter advances none of the back rooms receive any sun at any time— The garden looks bleak shaded as it is by the house now that the sun does not rise high in the horizon while the road in front is warm and cheerful—let us *flit* therefore (as the Scotch people call it) as soon as possible— I hope by tomorrows post Maddocks will receive directions from you how to answer the people that apply.

But Italy or the Sea. Clare has hinted post-obits &c to me which makes it appear doubtful to me whether we can go this winter— Perhaps I incline to a quiet home on the Kent coast—there it must be for warmth—but all must be decided by your own feelings concerning your health—Make your determination and I will abide by it—but Alba—indeed my love her departure must not be delayed— I have given my opinion concerning that in my former letters.

After all—dear Shelley—indiscision [*sic*] will be our bane talk with Godwin and Hunt or if you will consult only with your own mind—but determine in one way instantly or I foresee that we shall get into a scrape— You must see plainly that we cannot wait thus undecided long—so make the effort and resolve

Tell Hunt I like everything in his political article of this week except the title.<sup>1</sup> How are they all—and the piping fawns & the piping babes with *fa praparar*

Alba makes me hesitate chiefly about going aboard [*sic*]— I do not well see how she is to get there unless we take her. Clare talks of the imprudence of sending her through the means of the Hunts—and then you know she has talked to you about promises of writing [to Byron] and sending accounts—now this is all very well if there were any practicability in the thing—but promises with Alba! the first object that engaged his attention would put them all out of his head—and negotiated by letter also—why it is the labour of several months to get any kind of answer from him and then if he makes objections and you have to answer the child can never depart—in fact Clare although she in a blind kind of manner sees the necessity of it, does not wish her to go and will instinctively place all kind of difficulties in the way of our as it is very difficult task— Our going would obviate all this and the actual expence of the journey would not be greater. Let these weigh with you in a ponderous weight for if by imprudent delay we find (which is indeed far from being im-

<sup>1</sup> Dowden (II, 146n) is wrong in identifying this article in the *Examiner* as "Porcupine Renewing . . . ." See Letter 39, note 2.

probable) that the fair prospect of Alba's being brought up by her father is taken away how shall we reproach ourselves— Clare also will then see the extreme evil & distress of her situation & not easily forgive us for having destroyed her child's fortune by want of firmness— I also dread the answer you may receive from the capricious Albe to your *capitulations*<sup>2</sup>

Have you seen Cobbett's 23 No. to the Borough mongers Why he appears to be making out a list for a proscription— I actually shudder to read it—a revolution in this country would not be *bloodless* if that man has any power in it He is I fear somewhat of a Marius perhaps of a Marat—I like him not—I fear he is a bad man. He encourages in the multitude the worst possible human passion *revenge* or as he would probably give it that abominable *Christian* name retribution.

Now dearest I believe I have said all I can say on the subject—humbly offering my reasons and leaving it to you as the manly part to decide

I am pretty well—and my milk comes in greater quantities Clara and William are well

Affectionately Yours

Mary

[P.S.] I sent to Hookhams for some books a day or two ago and they have not come.

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley Esq./ Leigh Hunt Esq./ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) 10 o'Clock/ OC. 1/ 1817 (3) C/ OC 1/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.208–209); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 230–32; Dowden, II, 145–47, 150n; *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 15–17. TEXT: From original letter.

### 37. To Shelley

[Marlow,] Thursday, [October 2, 1817]

My dear Love

Your letter received per parcel tonight was very unsatisfactory. You decide nothing and tell me *nothing*— You say—"the Chancery expences *must* be paid" but you do not say whether our going to Italy would obviate this necessity— You say Longdill has not *undertaken* for *all* the debts but you do not mention for *how much* he has and [how] far those would help us or send us away

Now dearest Pray come down by friday (the day you receive this) if possible but at least I earnestly entreat you come by saturday's coach— I assure you that it is of the utmost consequence that we should see one another— I *cannot* come to London— If your presence is indispensable in London you could return Monday but I think from the account you give of folks dillatoriness you might be spared for a few days

<sup>2</sup> These capitulations were doubtless expressed in Shelley's letter of September 24, 1817, to Byron (Julian edition, IX, 245–47).



However it may be my love I most earnestly entreat you to come— I do not understand what you are doing or how things are going on pray come— I shall expect you indeed on Saturday for if you reflect I think you will perceive with me the necessity of our meeting indeed my love nothing can be done without it

How happy shall I be to see my dearest Shelley

I would use more arguments but I think it is plain— May I not expect you Saturday?

Your own

Come in the inside of the coach or do not come— High Wycombe coach was overturned last friday and a person killed

[*On a separate leaf:*] I almost think of writing my letter over again as the enclosed is so wild I fear you will not attend to it—but I am so firmly convinced of the necessity of our seeing each other, but I have not time (as it is near 12) for argument and I have used persuasion but I hope you will see it as I do—and come without delay—if you do not such is my view of the necessity I almost think I shall wean Clara & come up by the Monday's coach—yet surely you will not put me to so cruel an alternative yet our meeting is necessary for our desicion [*sic*] and our *immediate* desicion is necessary

I shall wait for your coming or answer to this with the utmost anxiety

On no account send down the girl you mention I will tell you my reasons when I see you

[*On a third leaf:*] I have written long letters explanatory of all I feel—Yours are still undecided— Little Alba's affairs weigh heavily on my mind I am not at peace untill she is on her way to Italy— Yet you say nothing of all this—in fact your letter tells me nothing

I wish to hear extremely the account of your money at the bankers

I earnestly hope that you have written to C. C.

I shall be truly miserable if you do not come saturday—I think then I must come up myself yet cows milk does not agree with the child & to bring her & lodgings in town is an expence & discomfort I cannot think of

Oh my love pray pray do come every thing will go wrong if you do not—

How wretched this unsettled state of our affairs makes me—how I wish we had not come to Marlow— I dare say after all you will not come if so God knows what I shall do but you will surely you will if it is only to hinder my being unhappy

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.194–96); A.L. (unsigned), 3 separate leaves, making 3 pp. 4to and 2 pp. 4½ x 7¼ inches. PRINTED: *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 17–18. TEXT: From original letter.

### 38. *To Shelley*

Marlow,

October 5, 1817

I am rather tired, my best beloved—with a letter I have written to the Hunts

—but this you will hold no excuse for not writing to you—and in fact I have many things to say—but the hope that you will be enabled to keep your promise & return tuesday makes me keep back many questions & thoughts that will be better answered then.<sup>1</sup>

Your babes are very well— But Willy suffers from the cold— I want sadly some flannell for petticoats both for him and myself—indeed the poor little fellow is very susceptible of cold and suffers a good deal— But Marianne would give so high a price—and I do not like to ask Mrs. G[odwin] and you are no judge— I do not want Welch flannell but it ought to be thick and good—if you do venture to buy it get 8 yds. Mr. Baxter is a good judge of those things but I should not like to ask him. Put the enclosed to him in the post.

Clara is rather disordered—cows milk evidently does not agree with her— If you have not written to Furnival do by the next post and ask his opinion of milk and bread. I get on very well without medicine— Now do write & tell him to direct his answer to Marlow.

In Geneva women who suckle a[re] forbidden to drink beer but are ordered wine. I think a little Madeira would do me good—not pure but mixed with water for I feel the want of some supporting drink— If you think the same as I do bring a bottle with you. I can get no chocolate here.

Remember dearest to bring me a good thick book to write extracts in— ruled— I send you a list of some books that I selected from the Manuel du Libraire which I think might be useful to me especially those I have marked under would you try to get them or some of them—Bring down also your proofs.<sup>2</sup>

How happy shall I be—my own dear love to see you again— Your last was so *very* very short a visit and after you were gone I thought of so many things I had to say to you and had no time to say—come tuesday dearest and let us enjoy some of each others company come and see your sweet babes and the little Commodore [Allegra or Alba] who is lively and an uncommonly interesting child— I never see her without thinking of the expressions in my Mother's letters concerning Fanny. If a mother's eyes were not partial she seemed like this Alba—she mentions her intelligent eyes & great vivacity. But this is a melancholy subject

I have written to Hunt but tell him over & above that our piano is in tune and that I wish he would come down by Monday's coach to play me a few tunes— He will think I jest but it would really give me the greatest pleasure— I would make love to him *pour passer le temps* that he might not regret the company of Marianne & Thornton— I do not tell you to tell him the latter part of this message but you may if you please—

I shall not hear from you tomorrow unless indeed you write by the coach

<sup>1</sup> Shelley responded to Mary's urgent request and went to Marlow on Friday or Saturday; he must have gone back to London on Sunday, the fifth. He did not return on Tuesday, the seventh.

<sup>2</sup> Either of *Frankenstein* or of *Laon and Cythna*.

nor shall I write for you will not receive the letter if you come tuesday—Hunt might come with you. I feel un[usually] kindly towards him for his kindness to you.

Good night my own best Shelley—tell me have you suffered from your journey—tell me also dearest if I may expect you— But you will answer this in person if I may.

A thousand kisses for you my own one

Your affectionate

Pecksie

[P.S.] I had occasion to send to Peacocks for a book & in my billet I asked why they had not sent for the paper—the answer returned was—Mrs. Peacocks compts and she did not think that it was convenient to us to lend the paper and therefore Mr. Peacock had told her not to send.

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 204–205); A.L. (signed "Pecksie"), 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 233–34; Dowden, II, 147–48; Marshall, I, 203 (quot., 11 lines); *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 18 (adds postscript omitted by Dowden). TEXT: From original letter.

### 39. *To Shelley*

Marlow,

Oct. 7th, 1817

You complain of this weather<sup>1</sup>—dear Love but I have seldom known any more pleasant—out in the air that is to say—for in the house we are glad to creep over the fire as if it were Christmas.

Your account of our expences is by very much too favourable. You say that you have only borrowed 250 our debts at Marlow are greater than you are aware of besides living in the mean time and articles of dress that I must buy— Now we cannot hope to sell the house for £1200— And to think of going abroad with only about £200 would be madness for that would not much more than carry us there and then we have to live untill the end of December— In fact I do not think we can go if we cannot find some means of raising money

I know not how it is my love but in the middle of the day I feel my spirits sink—the children every thing annoys me and I am not well again untill after dinner— I know I ought to take some nourishment at that time—but bread is the only thing I can take and that has no effect in sustaining or raising me— sometimes when the child comes to suck at that time I feel hardly able to support myself.

I shall expect you Wednesday my own love—and Willy who has become much better tempered will I have no doubt be very glad to see you. The behaviour of this child to the two little girls would be an argument in favour of those who advocate *instinctive natural affection* He will not go near Alba

<sup>1</sup> In his letter of Monday, October 6, to which this is an answer, Shelley wrote, "This weather does me great mischief," and, "I have borrowed £250 from H[orace] S[mith]."

and if she approaches him he utters a fretful cry untill she is removed—but he kisses Clara—strokes her arms & feet and laughs to find them so soft and pretty and the other day when he got a twig of mignonet after he had smelt it and handed it all round he put it to her nose to scent. As for the little lady herself she is quite a little doll—so diminutive yet well made and upright already holding her little head steadily on her shoulders.

I must say that the paragraph from my letter which Hunt has done me the honour to quote<sup>2</sup> [in the *Examiner*, October 5, 1817]—cuts a very foolish figure—it is so femininely expressed that all men of letters will on reading it acquit me of having a *masculine* understanding. If Hunt had told me he meant to put any thing of mine in I think I could have worded it with more print-worthy dignity. Give my love to him and a kiss to poor little Polly who I hope is getting on better with the model of Hunt than she did with mine— How are the children. Have you sent—dear, the parcel to Thompsons & did the porter ask for the pelisse?

Remember my book—for transcribing

I want to practise drawing a little before I go to Italy. I have accordingly purchased pencils but find that it is too cold to draw from nature—could you get me a drawing or two to copy— I do not like prints Ask Marianne they may be either pencil drawings or water coloured

By the bye I do think that we have a whole packet of Hunts prints down here—if so you can take them up with you when you return to London. I suppose that the little gentleman will not come down to play me Donne l'Amore and Auld Robin Gray.

I sent for some books to Hookhams but I fancy that I did not mention Goldsmith's Animated Nature. Will you write a 2d post letter about it—

Bring down your proofs—& if you can my broach. You could order one at any of the jewellers or I think if you went into any one in the Strand of [*sic*] Picadilly you might get a pretty one—it ought not to exceed £3 the price of the other—

Clare sends her love— The little bright eyed Commodore is as bluff as ever & as gay— Have you written to Furnival? And (what I dread to ask) C[laire] C[lairmont]?

Adieu my own love— Get rid of that nasty side ach— You will tell me that the Italian sun will be the best physician—be it so—but money money

<sup>2</sup> In the *Examiner*, October 5, 1817, in a footnote (page 626) to the leading article on "Porcupine Renewing His Old Quils, Or Remarks on Mr. Cobbett's Strange and Sudden Bristling Up Against Sir Francis Burdett," Hunt wrote: "A lady of what is called a masculine understanding, that is to say, of great natural abilities not obstructed by a *bad* education, writes thus in a letter to her husband [see Letter 36, of September 30]: 'Have you seen Cobbett's No. 23 . . . Retribution.' This attack, by the bye, of our fair friend's on the Christian vocabulary, seems no longer warrantable. A *priest*, who wrote a poem the other day called *Paris*, talks of the battle of Waterloo as having given 'to England the glory, and to Prussia the *revenge*,'; and the *Quarterly Review*, it seems, as well as the *Courier*, and the other bawlers against philosophy, praise this man's verses and opinions, and quote the present one especially. We thought, that according to the Christian system, the praise should have been to God, and the revenge to the Devil."

Come Wednesday<sup>8</sup>— I long to see you.

Most affectionately  
Your Pecksie

ADDRESS: Percy Bysshe Shelley Esq./ Messrs. Longdill & Butterfield/ 5 Gray's Inn Square/ London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) C/ 8 OC 8/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.202-203); A.L. (signed "Pecksie"), 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 236-37; Dowden, II, 150-51; *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 18-20. TEXT: From original letter.

#### 40. To Shelley

[Marlow, October 14, 1817]

I intended—my best love—to have sent the letters<sup>1</sup> by tomorrow mornings coach I shall not be able but depend on them by next day

I do not at all expect you by tomorrow evening but perhaps the day after—And do the Godwins come? I shall write to them by this post.

Your babes are quite well— Clara's eyes begin to emulate the pretty commodore's and Willy is fonder of her than ever—he is a sweet little fellow I wonder how he will like Italy.

Hunt was hardly *strong* enough in his paper today<sup>2</sup>— The horror of a man's dying in the street was represented as terrible but was it enough impressed on his reader the superabundant capacity of the spectator to have relieved him

I cannot write a long letter today but I will a very long one by tomorrow— by the parcel I shall send which will be sent to Hookhams

Your own  
Pecksie

[P.S.] Bring down with you when you come a piece of muslin which you can get at Maltby's in Holborn at 12/<sup>o</sup> per piece. Also three yds. of cambric muslin or thick jaconet—1½ yd. wide fit for frocks for William—enough of the smallest and plainest pattern plaid to make him a frock—and also of maroon coloured cloth to make a frock & spencer. Ask Marianne the quantity but tell her to allow for their being wider than hers—send also to the dyers for his pelisse and whatever else may be ready— You had better send all these things by the coach the first thing.

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley Esq/ Leigh Hunt Esq/ Lisson Grove North/ Paddington— London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) 10 o'Clock/ OC. 15/ 1817 (3) C/ 15 OC 15/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.199); A.L. (signed "Pecksie"), 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 238; Dowden, II, 152-53. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>8</sup>Shelley did not come, but replied to this letter on Wednesday, October 8 (see Julian edition, IX, 249-50). He came on Friday, the tenth, and remained until Sunday evening. (Dowden, II, 154.)

<sup>1</sup> Doubtless the letters for the *Six Weeks Tour*.

<sup>2</sup>In the *Examiner*, October 12, 1817, Hunt's leading article was on "Fellow-Creatures Suffered to Die in the Streets." The occasion for the article was a coroner's inquest on the death of Robt. Johnson, a discharged seaman who died from exposure after sleeping three nights out in the

41. *To Shelley*

Marlow,

Oct. 16, 1817

So you do not come this night—Love—nor any night—you are always away and this absence is long and becomes each day more dreary.—

Poor Curran! So he is dead and a sod is on his breast as four years ago I heard him prophecy would be the case within that year.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing is done you say in your letter and indeed I do not expect anything to be done this many months— This—if you continued well—would not give me so much pain except on Alba's account— If she were with her father I could wait patiently but the thought of what may come between the cup and the lip—between now and her arrival at Venice is a heavy burthen on my soul He may change his mind—or go to Greece—or to the devil and then what happens— My dearest Shelley be not I entreat you too self negligent— Yet what can you do? If you were here you might retort that question upon me but when I write to you I indulge false hopes of some miraculous answer springing up in the interval. Does not Longdill treat you ill—he makes out long bills and does nothing. You say nothing of the late arrest<sup>2</sup> what may be the consequences and may not they detain you for *lex longa est* and may you not be detained many months for Godwin must not be left unprovided— All these things make me run over the months and know not where to put my finger & say—during this your Italian journey shall commence—

Yet when I say that it is on Alba's account that I am anxious—this is only when you are away and with too much faith I believe you to be well— When I see you—drooping and languid—in pain and unable to enjoy life then on your account I ardently wish for bright skies & an Italian sun.

You will have received I hope the manuscript that I sent yesterday in a parcel to Hookhams<sup>3</sup>— I am glad to hear that the printing goes on so well—bring down all that you can with you.

If he were free and I had no anxiety what delight would Godwins visit give me—as it is I fear that it will make me dreadfully melancholy. Cannot you come with him—by the way you write I hardly expect you this week but is it really so!

weather in Covent-Garden Market. Hunt used this as a text for a comment on the social and political conditions that make this kind of thing possible. He gave an imaginative account of the thoughts and feelings of the dying man as each night and day passed.

<sup>1</sup> John Philpot Curran (1750–1817) died on October 14.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley had recently (exact date unknown) been arrested for debt by his uncle, Captain Pilford, and had been detained for two days. Whitton, Sir Timothy's solicitor, estimated Shelley's debts at not less than £1500. Several creditors were after him, and for a week or more after this letter he feared to return to Marlow. See Roger Ingpen, *Shelley in England* (London, Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1917), 522–26, for a longer account of this still-mysterious arrest.

<sup>3</sup> MS of the last part of the *Six Weeks Tour*, published by Hookham. The first part was evidently already in press; Shelley had taken it to London on September 23. Dowden's suggestion (II, 154n) that the MS was part of *Laon and Cythna* can, in view of Mary's letter of October 14, hardly be correct.

I think Alba's remaining here exceedingly dangerous. Yet I do not see what is to be done.

Your babes are well— Clara already replies to her nurse's caresses by smiles—and Willy kisses her with great tenderness

Your[s] very affectionately

[*Unsigned*]

[P.S.] Send instantly also several lb of tea—and I wish you would purchase a gown for Milly with a little note with it from Marianne that it may appear to come from her<sup>4</sup>— You can get one I should think for 12/ or 14/ but it must be stout—such a kind of one as we gave to the servant at Bath

Have you seen any thing of Mr. Baxter? Will you send the things I mentioned without delay When do you think of coming Be sure to send to the dyers for Williams pelisse and what else may be ready. Willy has just said good night to me he kisses the letter and says good night to you Clara is asleep.

ADDRESS: Percy B. Shelley Esq./ Leigh Hunt Esq/ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) 10 o'Clock/ OC. 17/ 1817 (3) C/ 17 OC 17/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.200–201); A.L. (unsigned), 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 239–40; Dowden, II, 153–54; Marshall, I, 205–206. TEXT: From original letter.

## 42. *To Shelley*

Marlow,

Saturday, October 18, 1817

Mr. Wright has called here today,<sup>1</sup> my dearest Shelley and wished to see you. I can hardly have any doubt that his business is of the same nature as that which made him call last week— You will judge but it appears to me that an arrest on Monday will follow your arrival Sunday. My love—you ought not to come down—a long—long week has past and when at length I am allowed to expect you I am obliged to tell you not to come— This is very cruel.

You may easily judge that I am not happy— My spirits sink during this continued absence— Godwin too will come down he will talk as if we meant to stay here and I must—must I? tell fifty prevarications or direct lies— when I thought that you would be here also I knew that your presence would lead to general conversation but Clare will absent herself we shall be alone and he will talk of our private affairs— I am sure that I shall never be able to support it.

And when is this [to] end?—do not answer this question by saying come up to town directly— Remember we lost all the little property we had at Bishopgate by going up to town—here we have much more to loose & I must not leave this house untill such things as we do not dispose of are put in a place of safety

<sup>4</sup> As a reward for Milly's services during Mrs. Hunt's visit.

<sup>1</sup> One of the several creditors, or his representative, who were threatening Shelley with arrest.

But Italy appears farther off than ever and the idea of it never enters my mind but Godwin enters also & makes it lie heavy at my heart— Had you not better speak—you might relieve me from a heavy burthen—Surely he cannot be blind to the many heavy reasons that urge us—your health the indispensable one if every other were away— I assure you that if my Father said— Yes you must go—do what you can for me—I know that you will do all you can— I should far from writing so melancholy a letter prepare every thing with a light heart—arrange our affairs here and come up to town to wait patiently the effect of your efforts— I know not whether it is early habit or affection but the idea of his silent quiet disapprobation makes me weep as it did in the days of my childhood.

I am called away by the cries of Clara I must go to feed her and there will be no time to resume this letter.

I shall not see you tomorrow God knows when I shall see you—Clare is forever wearying with her idle & childish complaints—can you not send me some consolation

Ever your affectionate

Mary

[P.S.] What about Pilfords arrest?<sup>2</sup> You never mention business. Give the bearer a shilling.

ADDRESS: P. B. Shelley Esq. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 197-98); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, I, 241-42; Dowden, II, 154-55; Marshall, I, 206-207. TEXT: From original letter.

#### 43. *To Christie Baxter*

Marlow,  
November, 1817.

We have no acquaintance here belonging to the town, as country friends are not very agreeable, but Jane (or as you must now call her Clare) lives with us, who is nearly the same creature as she was when you visited Skinner Street. I hope you will be good friends with her . . .

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Sold at Sotheby's in December, 1911, as Item 300, "The Property of a Gentleman living at Leamington." UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: An extract from an auction sale catalogue.

#### 44. *To W. T. Baxter*

Marlow,  
Dec. 3rd, 1817.

My dear sir you—receive the cheque enclosed for the money.

Isabell promised to write to me some time ago and not having performed this promise I am afraid that she is ill will you let me know about this.

Shelley is not well—he has a cough this house is so very damp—all the books in the library are mildewed we must quit it. Italy is yet uncertain.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 41, note 2.



Have you yet received a copy of Shelley's poem he has ordered one to be sent—and above all have you read Mandeville & what do you think of it.

When you write to Izzy [Isabel] tell her that I shall send her a parcel in a few days.

William & Clara are both well— Clara is very much grown & William grows daily I think— He suffers however when the weather is the least cold for his complexion is so delicate.

Remember me to Mrs. Booth when may we expect you both or one of you at Marlow.

Will you oblige Peacock by sending down all the Cobbetts that have been published since No. 25.

Clare and Shelley desire their best remembrances to you and your son in law.

Most sincerely  
M. W. Shelley.

ADDRESS: Mr. W. T. Baxter/ 117 Dorset Street/ Salisbury Square/ Fleet Street.  
POSTMARK: 4 o'Clock/ DE. 4/ 1817 EV. ORIGINAL: Not traced. In the possession of Maggs Brothers in 1921; abstract in their Catalogue 396, Autumn, 1920. PRINTED: W. E. Peck, *Shelley: His Life and Work* (1927), II, 55. TEXT: From *ibid.*

#### 45. *Shelley to Godwin*

Marlow,  
Dec. 7, 1817.

[P.S. by Mary] Will you ask Mamma to be so kind as to get next door to 41 half a yard and a nail of gold band for little Willy's hat and send it by the next coach. All our loves—

ADDRESS: William Godwin, Esq.,/ 41 Skinner St., Holborn/ London. POSTMARKS: (1) MARLOW (2) 8 DE 8/ 1817. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.184–86); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to, with seal. (P.S. on page 6.) PRINTED: Julian edition, IX, 260. (Shelley's letter has been printed many times, but Mary's postscript is usually omitted.) TEXT: From original letter.

#### 46. *Shelley to W. T. Baxter*

Marlow, December 30, 1817.

[P.S. by Mary]

My dear Sir,

You see I prophesied well three months ago, when you were here. I then said that I was sure that Mr. Booth was averse to our intercourse, and would find some means to break it off. I wish I had you by the fire here in my little study, and it might be "double, double, toil and trouble," but I could quickly convince you that your girls are not below me in station, and that in fact I am the fittest companion for them in the world; but I postpone the argument until I see you, for I know (pardon me) that *viva voce* is all in all with you.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 4, note 1 and Letter 32, note 3.

ORIGINAL: Carl H. Pforzheimer, New York. PRINTED: Dowden, II, 178; *Rosalind and Helen*, edited by H. B. Forman for the Shelley Society, 1888, xvi-xvii; Marshall, I, 208; by Isobel Stuart in *The Star*, March 12, 1894; Julian edition, IX, 277. TEXT: From Dowden, II, 178.

47. *To William T. Baxter*

[Marlow, February 3, 1818]

"In a few days we quit England for a long journey," Mary had written to Mr. Baxter, on February 3. "At such a time I could wish that all who have been our friends would be so still, but this is useless." The letter closed with "the most heartfelt wishes" of the writer for her friend's "happiness and welfare."<sup>1</sup>

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Dowden, II, 178 (quot., 3 lines). TEXT: From *ibid.*

48. *Shelley to Leigh Hunt*

Calais,

March 13, 1818.

[P.S. by Mary] Shelley is full of business, and desires me to finish this hasty notice of our safety. The children are in high spirits and very well. Our passage was stormy but very short. Both Alba and William were sick, but they were very good and slept all the time. We now depart for Italy, with very fine weather and good hopes.

Farewell, my dear Friend, may you be happy.

Your affectionate friend,

Mary W. S.

ADDRESS: Mr. Leigh Hunt/ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington, London/ Angletterre. ORIGINAL: A. Edward Newton, Daylesford, Penn., in 1937. PRINTED: T. J. Wise, *Letters of P. B. Shelley to Leigh Hunt* (1894), I, 26; *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century* (1895), edited by Nicoll and Wise, I, 338; Julian edition, IX, 290. TEXT: From Julian edition.

49. *To Leigh and Marianne Hunt*

Milan, April [6-8] 1818

My dear Friends

We have at length arrived in Italy. After winding for several days through vallies & crossing mountains and passing [Mt.] Cenis we have arrived in this land of blue skies & pleasant fields. The fruit trees [are] all in bloom and the fields green with the growing corn— Hunt already says—I should like this.

<sup>1</sup> Albion House was sold on January 25, 1818. Shelley left Marlow for London on February 7, was followed by Claire and the children on the ninth, and by Mary on the tenth. They took lodgings on the tenth at 119 Great Russell Street. While in London making final arrangements for the trip to Italy, they made frequent visits to the theater to enjoy the Italian opera and drama. They also enjoyed the society of all their friends: the Hunts, Peacock, Hogg, Keats, the Lambs, Horace Smith, and Novello (the musician). On March 9, at the parish church, St. Giles in the Fields, the children (William, Clara, and Clara Allegra) were christened. On March 11 they left London. Arriving in Calais on the twelfth and leaving it the next day, they went through Dijon, Lyons, Chambéry, Susa, and Turin, to Milan, where they arrived on the evening of April 4.

Indeed as we passed along the mountainous districts of Savoy we often said—Hunt would not like this—but the first evening that we arrived in Italy every thing appeared changed. We arrived at Susa the first Italian town at the foot of Cenis about six in the evening and Shelley and I went to look at a triumphal arch that had been erected to the honour of Augustus— It was nearly in perfect preservation and most beautifully situated surrounded by mountains— The path under it was preserved in beautiful order a green lane covered with flowers a pretty Italian woman went with us and plucked us a nosegay of violets.

Italy appears a far more civilized place than France—you see more signs of cultivation and work and you meet multitudes of peasants on the road driving carts drawn by the most beautiful oxen I ever saw— They are of a delicate dove colour with eyes that remind you of, and justify the Homeric epithet, *ox-eyed Juno*. In France you might travel many miles and not meet a single creature. The inns are infinitely better and the bread which is uneatable in France is here the finest and whitest in the world. There is a disconsolate air of discomfort in France that is quite wretched. In Italy we breathe a different air and every thing is pleasant around us.— At Turin we went to the opera—it was a little shabby one and except the lights on the stage the house was in perfect darkness—there were two good singers and these the people heard but during the rest of the time you were deafened by the perpetual talking of the audience.— We have been also at the opera of Milan. The house is nearly as large as that of London and the boxes more elegantly fitted up. The scenery and decorations much more magnificent Madame Camporeri is the Prima Donna but she was ill and we did not hear her—indeed we heard nothing For the people did not like the opera which had been repeated for every night for these three weeks so not one air was heard. But the ballet was infinitely magnificent— It was (strange to say) the story of Othello—but it was rather a tragic pantomime than a ballet— There was no dancer like Mam<sup>lle</sup> Milanie<sup>1</sup> but the whole was in a finer stile— The corps de ballet is excellent and they throw themselves into groups fit for a sculptor [*sic*] to contemplate. The music of the ballet was very fine and the gestures striking. The dances of many performers which are so ill executed with us are here graceful to the extreme. The theatre is not lighted and the ladies dress with bonnets and pelisses which I think a great pity— The boxes are dear—but the pit—in which none but respectable people are admitted is only eighteen pence so that our amusement is very cheap.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mlle. Milanie was a ballet dancer whom they had seen several times during their last month in London. They were all enthusiastic about her beautiful dancing and frequently referred to her afterwards.

<sup>2</sup> Arriving in Milan on April 4, they went to the opera on Sunday, the fifth. Claire's comments on Italian opera (in her diary) confirm Mary's impressions: "Torino is nobly built. We stay a day & go to the Opera of which I neither could get at its tide nor make out a single word of what it was all about; there was however [in] it some beautiful airs. The only light in the house is that which the stage affords. I could not even perceive the faces of those who sat in the

I like this town— The ladies dress very simply and the only fault of their costume is the length of their petticoats so that Marianne's pretty feet would be quite hid. We think however of spending the summer on the banks of the lake of Como which is only twenty miles from here.<sup>3</sup> Shelley's health is infinitely improved and the rest of the chicks are quite well. How are you all — And how do you like Don Garcia and il barbiere di Seviglia. We half expected a letter to have arrived before us—but the posts travel very slowly here. Let us have long letters.— Do you see Peacock and is he in despair Remember me to all friends and kiss your babes for me.

I almost forgot to mention that we spent one day at 30 miles from Geneva Elise's Mother and father-in-law and little girl came to see her Aimee<sup>4</sup> is very beautiful with eyes something like but sweeter than William's—a perfect shaped nose and a more beautiful mouth than her Mothers expressive of the greatest sensibility

Adieu—my dear Hunt & Marianne La Prima Donna [Claire] sends her affectionate remembrances and Shelley his love

Most affectionately yours  
Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Direct to us—

Mess. Marietti—Banquiers  
Milano  
Italie

Tell Ollier that S[helley] has not received his parcel but that he can send the proofs<sup>5</sup> to Peacock for revision

We left several things at our lodgings in Great Russel St. to be sent you—among the rest have you received William's service—if not have kindness to enquire for it, for I should be very sorry that it should be lost.

Shelley wishes you to call at the first jewellers on the left hand side of the way in New Bond St—as you enter it from Oxford St. where we bough[t] Marianne's broach— Shelley left a ring to be mended and forgot to call for it

Tell Peacock to send Beppo [1817] & some pins with the first parcel—and sealing wax these things are so bad here

ADDRESS: Mr. Leigh Hunt/ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS (ENGLISH): (1) FPO/ AP. 23/ 1818 (2) 4 o'Clock/ 23. AP 1818 EV (3) 12 o'Clock/ AP. 23/ 1818 N<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2739); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 44-48. TEXT: From original letter.

loge next to ours. In three days more we get to Milan. . . . Go to the Opera. A most magnificent Ballet Pantomime of the story of Othello."

<sup>3</sup> Mary and Shelley went to Como on the ninth and returned to Milan on the twelfth.

<sup>4</sup> At Cambéry (printed "Genoa" in *Letters*). Elise, the Shelleys' Swiss maid, was the mother of Aimée.

<sup>5</sup> Of *Rosalind and Helen*, begun at Marlow and given unfinished to Ollier to get into print; finished at the Baths of Lucca in August (see Letter 34, note 2).

50. *Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock*

Milan,  
April 30, 1818.

[P.S. by Mary] P.S. If you see Hunt give my love—to him & his Marianne—tell him I am going to buy some airs for him from an opera we saw here

Be so kind as to remember the things I mentioned in S[helley]'s last for our midsummer parcel and add Beppo<sup>6</sup>—(if possible) Le proces de sualdest—

ADDRESS: T. L. Peacock, Esqr./ Great Marlow/ Bucks/ Angleterre. POST-MARK: (English) FPO/ MY. 14/ 1818. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.231-32); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. (P.S. on folio 232.) PRINTED: Julian edition, IX, 308. TEXT: From original letter.

51. *To Leigh and Marianne Hunt*

Leghorn<sup>1</sup>—May 13, 1818

My dear Friends

We have been many weeks absent from England and we have had no letter from you— I hope however that there is a letter on the road and that this letter will only make you say— Have they not yet had our letter and not— Indeed I must write soon— We have as you may perceive by the date of my letter travelled farther south since I last wrote— We have passed through a country which we [*sic*] would be the delight of Hunt— Beautiful hedges blooming with hawthorn in flower and roses—beautiful lanes are bounded by these and the corn fields are planted with rows of trees round which the vines twist themselves and are festooned from tree to tree so as to form the most pleasant leafy alleys in the world— After travelling several days through a country like this blooming and fertile like a perpetual garden we came to the Appenines which we crossed in a most violent wind so that Clare was very much afraid that the carriage would blow over— Here we quitted the scene which would be so pleasant to Hunt but we found it again in the vale of the Arno along the banks of the river where nothing was wanting to the beauty of the scene but that the river should be capable of reflecting its banks but unfortunately it is too muddy— Pisa is a dull town situated on the banks of the Arno—it has a fine cathedral but not to be compared to that of Milan—and a tower which has been so shaken by an earthquake that it leans many feet on one side— Its gallery of pictures or whatever it contains we did not see putting that off untill our return to the town— One thing however which disgusted me so much that I could never walk in the streets except in misery was that criminals condemned to labour work publicly in the streets heavily ironed in pairs with a man with a gun to each pair to guard against their escape— These poor wretches look sallow and dreadfully wretched and you could get into no street but you heard the clanking of their chains.

<sup>6</sup> Written by Byron in the autumn of 1817, published in 1818.

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Milan on Friday, May 1, and arrived in Leghorn on Saturday, May 9.

I think this circumstance made us quit Pisa sooner than we otherwise should—and we came here to Leghorn to present a letter to a friend<sup>2</sup>—we shall stay here however but a short time for we intend to pass the summer at Florence. The people that we know here have been many years in Italy and have seen a great deal of the society in the principal towns here— There seems to be a very pleasant way of going on here if the members that compose the company are as agreeable as is their manner of visiting— One lady keeps open house in the evening and the rest resort to her—there are no refreshments and the English complain that they do not know what to do when they come in for there is no appearance of receiving visits—for the company instead of assembling altogether are dispersed in parties about the room. They told us that whenever you call at an Italian house the servant always puts her head out of window and demands *chi è* whatever time of day or night it may be— The proper answer to this question is *amici* but those people [who] do not know the proper reply are terribly puzzled to know what to answer to this *chi è* which meets them at every corner— One of their friends visiting a house after having been kept a long time in the street while they were screaming *chi è* to him from the window and he was exhausting all answers to them but the right one—at length he made his way to the stairs which as they always are in Italy, were dark and as he was groping along the mistress of the house called out *Chi è* and the poor man quite confounded not recognizing the voice—called out *Bruta bestia, andate al diavolo*—and rushed out of the house.

This town is a noisy mercantile one and we intend to quit it— It cannot be compared to Milan—which was a very pleasant city large and populous yet quiet. There is no opera and there was an excellent one at Milan—particularly one singer who is famous in all Italy of the name David<sup>3</sup>—he has a tenor voice and sing[s] in a softer & sweeter way than you ever hear in England— In Italy except the first night or two you can never hear any thing of the opera except some favourite airs—for the people make it a visiting place & play cards and sup in the boxes so you may guess that the murmur of their voices rises far above the efforts of the singers—but they became silent to hear some of David's songs which hardly at all accompanied—stole upon the ear like a murmur of waters while Mad. Camporeri ran up the octaves beside him in a far different manner

You will be pleased to hear that Shelley is much better than he was— I suppose you all in England go on as you did when we left you but I should

<sup>2</sup> Maria Gisborne, wife of Mr. John Gisborne. In August, 1799, Mary's father, William Godwin, had proposed marriage to her, then the widow of Mr. Reveley; but she had preferred Mr. Gisborne, whom she married in 1800. The Gisbornes and Henry Reveley, Mrs. Gisborne's son by her first husband, were very close friends of the Shelleys until Shelley's death in 1822, and Mary continued the friendship until the Gisbornes' deaths in 1836. Shelley and Mary both admired Mrs. Gisborne very much, but regarded Mr. Gisborne, learned though he was, as a bore. Mary's account of Mrs. Gisborne (C. Kegan Paul, *William Godwin, His Friends and Contemporaries*, [London, Henry S. King & Co., 1876, 2 vols.], I, 81–83, 332–33) is most interesting.

<sup>3</sup> Giovanni Davide (1789–c.1851), a celebrated Italian tenor.

like to know how all your little babes are— Do you see much of Peacock—and tell me if you go often to the opera and if any changes have taken place in that singing Paradise. We are the same as we were except that before we left Milan Alba was sent to Venice<sup>4</sup> where they dress her in little trousers trimmed with lace & treat her like a little princess.

There lives here in Leghorn and we are going to see her an Aunt of Marianna's favorite Mr. Haydon<sup>5</sup>—that Hero de se who has lately sent her over his bust in marble and promises to come and see her when his picture is finished but you [know] when that will be or rather you do not know as it goes on in the same manner as Penelope's web. He writes long letters to his relations here and I fancy they think him a little God

What weather have you in England—here it is very pleasant although not so hot as I expected but we have peas and strawberries for dinner and I fancy you will not have them for another month—but this place is cooler than more inland towns on account of its vicinity to the sea which is here like a lake without tides blue and tranquil

Shelley and Clare send their love. Adieu my dear Hunt and Marianne. May Æsculapius keep you in health which prayer I have no doubt he will hear if you do not remain at home so much as you used—

Most affectionately yours

Mary W Shelley

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ 13 Lisson Grove North/ Paddington/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2, English) FPO/ MY. 28/ 1818 (3) 28. MY/ 1818 EV (4) 12 o'Clock/ MY. 28/ 1818 N<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2740); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Letters*, 48–54. TEXT: From original letter.

## 52. To Maria Gisborne

Casa Bertini

Bagni di Lucca<sup>1</sup>

June 15, 1818

My dear Madam

It is strange after having been in the habit of visiting you daily, now for so many days to have no communication with you; and after having been accustomed for a month to the tumult of Via Grande to come to this quiet scene, where we hear no sound except the rushing of the river in the valley below—While at Livorno I hardly heard the noise, but when I came here I felt the

<sup>4</sup> Alba left Milan in the care of Elise, the Swiss maid, on April 28.

<sup>5</sup> Benjamin Robert Haydon, English painter and friend of Keats. His aunt in Leghorn was Mrs. Partridge. On April 7, 1818, she wrote to Haydon: "I must thank you for the fine bust, which arrived perfectly safe. I brought it myself yesterday in the carriage to Ardenza, where I hope it will remain for many years an ornament to the habitation and an honour to the inhabitants."—F. W. Haydon (ed.), *Benjamin Robert Haydon: Correspondence and Table Talk* (London, Chatto and Windus, 1876, 2 vols.), I, 332. Mary, with Shelley, Claire, and the Gisbornes, called on Mrs. Partridge on June 5 (*Shelley and Mary*, II, 281).

<sup>1</sup> To which they went on June 11, Shelley already having been there and taken a house.

silence as a return to something very delightful from which I had been long absent. We live here in the midst of a beautiful scene and I wish that I had the imagination and expressions of [a] poet to describe it as it deserves and to fill you all with an ardent desire to visit it— We are surrounded by mountains covered with thick chestnut woods—they are peaked and picturesque and sometimes you see peeping above them the bare summit of a distant Appennine. Vines a[re] cultivated on the foot of the mountains— The walks in the woods are delightful; for I like nothing so much as to be surrounded by the foliage of trees only peeping now and then through the leafy screen on the scene about me— You can either walk by the side of the river or on commodious paths cut in the mountains, & for ramblers the woods are intersected with narrow paths in every direction—Our house is small but commodious and exceedingly clean for it has just been painted and the furniture is quite new— We have a small garden and at the end of it is an arbour of laurel trees so thick that the sun does not penetrate it— Nor has my prediction followed us that we should every where find it cold—although not hot the weather has been very pleasant— We see the fire flies in an evening—somewhat dimmed by the brightness of the moon—

And now I will say a few words of our domestic economy—*albeit* I am afraid the subject has tired you out of your wits more than once— Signor Chiappa<sup>2</sup> we found perfectly useless—he would talk of nothing but himself and recommended a person to cook our dinner for us at 3 pauls a day— So, as it is, Paolo<sup>3</sup> (whom we find exceedingly useful) cooks and manages for us, and a woman comes at 1 paul a day to do the dirty work. We live very comfortably and if Paolo did not cheat us he would be a servant worth a treasure for he does every thing cleanly & exactly without teizing us in any way— So we lead here a very quiet pleasant life—reading our Canto of Ariosto—and walking in the evening among these delightful woods— We have but one wish—you know what that is but you take no pity on us, and exile us from your presence so long—that I quite long to see you again— Now we see no one—the Signor Chi[a]ppa is a stupid fellow and the Cas[c]ino is not open that I know of—at least it is not at all frequented, when it is every kind of amusement goes on there, particularly dancing which is divided into four parts—English & french country dances; quadrilles; walzes; & Italian dances, these take place twice aweek on which evenings the ladies dress but on others they go merely in a walking dress.

We have found among our books a volume of poems of Lord Byrons which you have not seen—some of them I think you will like—but this will be a novelty to recommend us on our return— I begin to be very much delighted

<sup>2</sup> Dowden (II, 211) conjectures that this was Signor G. B. del Chiappa and that the house which the Shelleys took belonged to him.

<sup>3</sup> Paolo Foggi, the Italian servant, who was finally dismissed in Naples after corrupting and marrying the Swiss servant, Elise, and who later caused Shelley much trouble by spreading scandalous tales about him.



with Ariosto—the beginning of the nineteenth canto is particularly beautiful— It is the wounding of Medoro and his being relieved by Angelica who for a wonder shews herself in the light of [a] sympathizing and amiable person.

Mr. Shelley is tolerably well he desires to be most kindly remembered [*sic*] to you & Mr. Gisborne not forgetting the Macchinista<sup>4</sup> who although he has seen very little of him is [a] favourite of his from certain phisiognomonical reasons— You will also have the kindness to present my best remembrances both to him and Mr. G.—. Clare desires to be remembered— But we all of us repine that we must send such messages and that you are not all here when I could express to [you] by words how much I am

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Most obliged & Affectionately Yours

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

[P.S.] Has Mr. Revely made a Callesidoscope? and do you find as much pleasure as the Londone[r]s in looking through it?

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ Signora Gisborne/ 1091 Via Genesi/ Fuore della porta di Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARK: (1) LUCCA (2) 19 GIUGNO. ENDORSED: Baths of Lucca, 15 June, Recd. 19 Do., Ans. 21st Do. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.264–65); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 98–100; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 283–85; Dowden, II, 211–12 (quot., 29 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 52–53. TEXT: From original letter.

### 53. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Bagni di Lucca

2 July, 1818.

My dear Madam

An Earthquake for the Steam Engine and thus to swallow up Mr. Reeveley's whole territory is somewhat a harsh remedy yet I would wish for one that could transport it (if you will not come without it) to these Bagni where I am sure you would be enchanted with every thing except the English that are crowded here to the almost entire exclusion [of] Italians; so that I think it would be easier to have a conversazione of Italians in England than here in their native country— We see none but English, we hear nothing but English spoken. The walks are filled with English nurserymaids, a kind of animal I by no means like, & dashing staring Englishwomen, who surprise the Italians who always are carried about in Sedan Chairs, by riding on horseback— For us we generally walk except last Teusday, when Shelley and I took a long ride to *il prato fiorito*; a flowery meadow on the top of one of the neighbouring Appenines— We rode among chestnut woods hearing the noisy cicala, and there was nothing disagreeable in it except the steepness of the ascent— The woods about here are in every way delightful especially when they are plain with grassy walks through them—they are filled with sweet singing birds

<sup>4</sup> The engineer, Henry Reveley, Mrs. Gisborne's son.

and not long ago we heard a Cuckoo— Mr. Shelley wishes to go with me to Monte [San] Pele[g]rino<sup>1</sup>—the highest of the Appenines at the top of which there is a shrine— It is distant about 22 miles— Can it be there that the Italian palates were deceived by unwholesome food (to talk of that hideous transaction in their own cool way)?—and would you think it advisable for us to make this pilgrimage? We must go on horseback and sleep in one of the houses on the mountain.

I have had a letter from my father—he does not appear very well in health but I hope the summer will restore him— He says in his letter—"I was extremely gratified by your account of Mrs. Gisborne. I have not seen her, I believe, these twenty years; not, I think, since she was Mrs. Gisborne. And yet by your description she is still a delightful woman. How inexpressibly pleasing it is to call back the recollection of years long past, and especially when the recollection belongs to a person in whom one deeply interested oneself, as I did in Mrs. Reveley! I can hardly hope for so great a pleasure, as it would be to me to see her again."

We are now in the 36th Canto of Ariosto. How very entertaining it is, and how exceedingly beautiful are many of the stories. Yet I cannot think him so great [a] poet as Spenser although as I said before a much better story teller. I wonder if I shall like Tasso better!

Shelley intends to write in a day or two and in the mean time both Clare and he desire to be kindly remembered to you all.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Yours Affectionately & obliged

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] A friend in England<sup>2</sup> asks us if a family of 3 persons can live at Pisa with 4 servants—an excellent storehouse furnished, a horse & chaise—a garden of 2 acres—denying themselves no comforts required by a respectable family—for less than £500 per annum— I say no— What do you say?

You know letters may come directed to Miss Clairmont.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ Signora Gisborne/ 1091 Via Genesi/ Fuore della porta di Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) LUCCA (2) 8 LUGLIO. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.266-67); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 100-101; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 291-92; Dowden, II, 212, 215 (quotes., 5 & 6 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 53-54. TEXT: From original letter.

## 54. To Maria Gisborne

Bagni di Lucca,  
A[u]gust 17, 1818

My dear Madam

It gave me great pleasure to receive your letter after so long a silence,

<sup>1</sup> Shelley later made this pilgrimage alone, on August 12, 1820, the result of which was *The Witch of Atlas*, written on August 14-16.

<sup>2</sup> Could this be Horace Smith, who eventually retired from business in 1821?

when I had begun to conjecture a thousand reasons for it and among others illness, in which I was half right.— Indeed I am much concerned to hear of Mr. Reveley's attack, and sincerely hope that nothing will retard his speedy recovery. His illness gives me a slight hope that you might now be induced to come to the baths if it were even to try the effect of the hot baths. You would find the weather cool for we already feel in this part of the world that the year is declining by the cold mornings and evenings. I have another selfish reason to wish that you would come which I have a great mind not to mention, yet I will not omit it as it might induce you— Shelley and Clare are gone (they went today) to Venice<sup>1</sup> on important business and I am left to take care of the house—now if all of you or any of you would come and cheer my solitude it would be exceedingly kind— I dare say you would find many of your friends here— Among the rest there is the Signora Felichi whom I believe you knew at Pisa.

Shelley & I have ridden almost every evening. Clare did the same at first but she has been unlucky and once fell from her horse and hurt her knee so as to knock her up for some time. It is the fashion here among all the English to ride on horseback; and it is very pleasant on these fine evenings, when we set out at sunset and are lighted home by Venus, Jupiter and Diana—three of the greatest deities—who kindly lend us their light after the sleepy Apollo is gone to bed— The road which we frequent is raised somewhat above and overlooks the river affording some very fine points of view among these woody mountains.

Still we know no one; we speak to one or two people at the Casino and that is all— We live in our studious way going on with Tasso whom I like—but who, now I have read more than half his poem I do not know that I like so well as Ariosto.— Shelley translated the Symposium in ten days<sup>2</sup> (an anecdote for Mr. Bielby) It is a most beautiful piece of writing,—I think you will be delighted with it— It is true that in many particulars it shocks our present manners, but no one can be a reader of the works of antiquity unless they can transport themselves from these to other times and judge not by our but by their morality.

Shelley is tolerably well in health—the hot weather has done him good— Clare too I think is better— I must just mention that one of our friends<sup>3</sup> has sent us a parcel directed to you—by ship I believe—but he does not expressly mention how.

We have been in high debate nor have we come to any conclusion—concerning the land or sea journey to Naples— We have been thinking that when we want to go that although the equinox will be past yet the ecquinoctial winds will hardly have spent themselves—and I cannot express to you how I

<sup>1</sup> They went to arrange with Byron for Claire to see Allegra.

<sup>2</sup> Begun on July 9, finished on the seventeenth, corrected by the twentieth, on which day Mary began transcribing it.

<sup>3</sup> T. L. Peacock.

fear a storm at sea with two such young children as William and Clara— Do you know the periods when the Mediterranean is troubled and when the wintry Halcyon days come— However it may be we shall certainly see you before we proceed southward

We have been reading Eustace's tour through Italy<sup>4</sup>— I do not wonder the Italians reprinted it— Among other select specimens of his way of thinking, he says that the Romans did not derive their arts and learning from the Greeks— That the Italian ladies are chaste and the Lazzeeroni<sup>5</sup> honest and industrious— And that as to assassination and highway robbery in Italy it is all a calumny—no such things were ever heard of— Italy was the garden of Eden and all the Italians Adams and Eves untill the Blasts of Hell (i.e. the French for by that polite name he designates them) came. By the bye an Italian servant stabbed an English one here—it was thought dangerously at first but the man is doing better.

I have scribbled a long letter and I dare say you have long wished to be at the end of it— Well now you are— So my dear Mrs. Gisborne with best remembrances to Mess. G[isborne] & R[eveley]

Yours obliged and affectionately

Mary W Shelley.

[P.S.] If your heart should be moved to come and visit me be so kind as to encrease Mr. Dunn's<sup>6</sup> debt and bring a few pounds of tea with you

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ La Signora Gisborne/ 1091 Via Genesi/ Fuore della porta di Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) LUCCA (2) 21 AGOSTO. ENDORSED: Recd. 22 Aug. Ans. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.268-69); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 102-104; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 313-15; Dowden, II, 240 (quot., 4 lines); Marshall, I, 218-20. TEXT: From original letter.

## 55. To Maria Gisborne\*

Casa Capucini,

Este,

September [c. 13], 1818<sup>1</sup>

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

I hasten to write to you to say that we have arrived safe<sup>2</sup> and yet I can hardly

<sup>4</sup> John Chetwode Eustace, *A Tour Through Italy, Exhibiting a View of Its Scenery, &c.* (1813), frequently reprinted in revised editions.

<sup>5</sup> Neapolitan mendicants.

<sup>6</sup> Henry Dunn (1776-1867), an Englishman who since 1814 had operated a British general store in Leghorn, in the Via Ferdinando, later called the Via Vittorio Emanuele. He is frequently referred to by the Shelleys, Gisbornes, Byron, and Trelawny.

<sup>1</sup> Mary arrived at Este on September 5. The date-postmark (September 18) was stamped on this letter upon its arrival in Leghorn.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley had accepted Byron's proposal that he should occupy for a time Byron's villa (Casa Capucini) at Este, among the Euganean Hills. Here Claire was to enjoy the company of Allegra. In response to Mary's repeated invitation, the Gisbornes had come to Lucca on August 25, but Mary responded to Shelley's urgent letter, packed, and set out for Este on August 31. Their infant Clara became ill with dysentery on the way, and lingered until September 24, when she died at Venice a few minutes after her parents had rushed her there in order to secure competent medical aid.

call it safe since the fatigue has given my poor *Ca* an attack of dysentery and although she is now somewhat recovered from that disorder she is still in a frightful state of weakness and fever an[d] is reduced to be so thin in this short time that you would hardly know her again—the physician of Este is a stupid fellow but there is one come from Padua & who appears clever so I hope under his care she will soon get well, although we are still in great anxiety concerning her.

I found Mr. Shelley very anxious for our non arrival for besides other delays we were detained a whole day at Florence for a signature to our passport—The house at Este is exceedingly pleasant with a large garden and quantities of excellent fruit— I have not yet been to Venice and know not when I shall since it depends upon the state of Clara's health— I hope Mr. Reveley is quite recovered from his illness—and I am sure the Baths did him a great deal of good—so now I suppose all your talk is how you will get to England— Shelley agrees with me that you could live very well for your £200 per an[num] in Marlow or some such town, and I am sure you would be much happier than in Italy—how all the English dislike it— The Hoppners<sup>3</sup> speak with the greatest acrimony of the Italians & Mr. Hoppner says that he was actually driven from Italian society by the young men continually asking him for money—everything is saleable in Venice—even the wives of the gentry if you pay well— It appears indeed a most frightful system of society Well—when shall we see you again soon I dare say— I am so much hurried that you will be kind enough to excuse the abruptness of this letter— I will write soon again and in the meantime write to me— Shelley & Clare desire the kindest remembrances—

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Affectionately yours,  
Mary W S.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ La Signora Gisborne/ Via Genesi/ Fuore della Porta di Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) ESTE (2) 18 SETTEMBRE. ENDORSED: Recd. 19th Sept. Ansd. 20 Nov. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.270-71); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 328-29; Marshall, I, 225-26. TEXT: From original letter.

## 56. *To Lord Byron*

Este,  
October 3, 1818.

Dear Lord Byron,

I take advantage of an opportunity of a person going to Venice to send you "Mazeppa," and your ode [to Venice], with, I hope, not many errors, and those partly from my not being able to decipher your MS.

<sup>3</sup> Belgrave Hoppner was the British consul-general at Venice. He and his Swiss wife (*née* Isabelle May) were for some time, at their own request, in charge of Allegra. "After his retirement he settled with his wife at Versailles and upon her death went to Turin where he died." —R. Glynn Grylls, *Mary Shelley, A Biography* (London, Oxford University Press, 1938), 99n.

It will give me great pleasure (if the Fornaretta<sup>4</sup> will permit) if you will send me your "Don Juan" by the bearer. You may trust him, as we often employ him. At any rate write a line to say that you have received this safe, as I do not like to send your MS. until I know that my copy is in your hands. You will see by my copying "Mazeppa" so quickly that there is more of pleasure than labour in my task. Allegra is perfectly well.

M. W. Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 88. TEXT: From *ibid*.

### 57. Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

Bologna,

Nov. 10, 1818

[*Shelley's letter is in Mary's hand; she adds this explanatory note at the top of the first page*] I write out Shelley's letter because he has written so wide that it takes up too much room<sup>5</sup>— Take care of these letters because I have no copies & I wish to transcribe them when I return to England.

ADDRESS: Thomas L. Peacock Esq/ Great Marlow/ Bucks. POSTMARK: FPO/ DE. 8/ 1818. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1 ff.259–60); A.L., 4 pp. 4to (This is Mary's copy of Shelley's letter. Shelley's original letter is also in the Bodleian, ff.253–54, and is dated Monday [November 9].) PRINTED: Julian edition, IX, 348. TEXT: From Mary's MS copy in the Bodleian.

### 58. Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

Rome,

Nov. [20], 1818

[P.S. by Mary] be so kind as to send 12 Brookman & Langdon pencils 3BB—3B—3F—3HF—so marked Untill the end of February—you had better direct your letters ferma in posta Napoli—after that time we return to Rome.

ADDRESS: T. L. Peacock, Esq./ Great Marlow/ Bucks/ Inghilterra/ Angleterre. POSTMARKS: (English): (1) FPO/ DE. 12/ 1818 (2) DE/ 12/ 1818. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.255–56); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 6. TEXT: From original letter.

### 59. To Maria Gisborne

Naples,<sup>1</sup>

Dec. [11], 1818

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

I hasten to answer your kind letter as soon as we are a little recovered from the fatigue of our long journey although I still feel wearied and overcome by it—so you must expect a very stupid letter. We set out from Este the day

<sup>4</sup> La Fornarina (Margarita Cogni), wife of a baker and one of Byron's Venetian mistresses.

<sup>5</sup> Mary's copying was, of course, to reduce postal charges.

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Este on November 5 and arrived in Rome on Friday, the twentieth. Shelley set out alone for Naples on the twenty-seventh; Mary, Claire, and the children followed on the twenty-eighth, and arrived in Naples on December 1. They lodged at 250 Riviera di Chiaia.

after I wrote to you— We remained one day at Ferrara & two at Bologna looking at the memorials preserved of Tasso and Ariosto in the former town and at the most exquisite pictures in the latter— Afterwards we proceeded along the coast Road by Rimini Fano Fossombrone &c— We saw the divine waterfall of Terni—and arrived safely at Rome. We performed this journey with our own horses with Paolo to drive us which we found a very æconomical & a very disagreeable way so we shall not attempt it again— To you who have seen Rome I need not say how enchanted we were with the first view of Rome and its antiquities—one drawback they have at present which I hope will be fully compensated for in the future— The ruins are filled with galley slaves at work— They are propping the Coliseum & making very deep excavations in the forum. We remained a week at Rome and our fears for the journey to Naples were entirely removed they said there that there had not been a robbery on the road for 8 months— This we found afterwards to be an exaggeration but it tranquillized us so much that Shelley went on first to secure us lodgings and we followed a day or two after— We found the road guarded and the only part of the road where there was any talk of fear was between Terracina and Fondi where it was not thought advisable that we should set out from the former place before daylight— Shelley travelled with a Lombard merchant & a Neapolitan priest—he remained only two nights [on] the road—and he went *veterino*, so you may guess he had to travel early & late. The priest—a great strong muscular fellow was almost in convulsions with fear—to travel before daylight along the Pomptine Marshes— There was talk of two bishops murdered & that touched him nearly— The Robbers spare foreigners but never Neapolitan men if they are young & strong so he was the worst off of the party—the merchant did not feel very comfortable & they were both surprised at Shelley's quietness— That quiet was disturbed however between Capua & Naples by an assassination committed in broad daylight before their eyes— [A] young man ran out of a shop on the road followed by a woman armed with a great stick & a man with a great knife—the man overtook him & stabbed him in the nape on the neck so that he fell down instantly stone dead— The fearful priest laughed heartily at Shelley's horror on the occasion—

Well we are now settled in comfortable lodgings which S[helley] took for 3 louis a week opposite the Royal gardens—you no doubt remember the situation— We have a full view of the bay from our windows—so I think we are well off— As yet we have seen nothing but we shall soon make some excursions in the environs<sup>2</sup>—

I will write soon again but the journey has quite knocked me up— Be so kind as to send our parcel as soon as you can directed to the care of M. Falconet, Bankers, Naples

Use our little purse in paying for our letters & parcels— William is very

<sup>2</sup> On December 8 they had made a memorable trip to Baiæ.

Mary W. Shelley

JANUARY 24, 1819 : 62

well— S[helley] & Clare send their kindest remembrances— Excuse this stupid scrawl.

Ever yours affectionately

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Shelley left his card at the door of Sig. Castellani but he has not returned his call.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ La Signora Gisborne/ Via Genesi/ Fuore della Porta dei Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) NAP. 1818/ 11.DIC (2, Leghorn) 18 DICEMBRE. ENDORSED: Recd. 20, Dec. Ansd. 15, Jany. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.272-73); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 107-108; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 349-50; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 54-55. TEXT: From original letter.

## 60. Shelley to Leigh Hunt

Naples,

December 22, 1818.

[P.S. by Mary] Ollier has orders to pay Marianne £5. I owe her part of it, and with the other I wish her to pay £1 10s. od. to the tailor who made my habit if he calls for it. His charge will be more, but do not pay it him.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esq.,/ 8 York Buildings,/ New Road,/ London/ Inghilterra. ORIGINAL: Not traced. A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to; S. de Ricci writes (*Bibliography of Shelley's Letters*, 150): "Belonged (about 1886) to Walter Leigh Hunt; offered for £52 by Pearson, Autogr. cat. 10 [1892?], pp. 39-40, n. 464; sale at Sotheby's (21 March 1892, pp. 26-27, n. 245) £34 to Toovey; Mrs. L. F. Holding's collection, at Southsea; her sale (8 July 1905, pp. 35-36, n. 192) £38 to Robson." PRINTED: *Literary Anecdotes of the Nineteenth Century* (1895), edited by Nicoll and Wise, I, 343; *Letters from P. B. Shelley to Leigh Hunt*, edited by Wise, I, 39; Julian edition, X, 11 (not credited to Mary). TEXT: From Julian edition.

## 61. Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

Naples

Dec. [22] 1818

[P.S. by Mary] You had better direct all your letters to Livorno & not here—and when you send another parcel I wish you would contrive to get 2 hair-brushes & a small tooth comb from [Florrista<sup>1</sup>] hairdresser—Germain St. behind St. James Church—

ADDRESS: T. Peacock, Esq./ Great Marlow/ Bucks, Inghilterra/ Angleterre. POSTMARKS: (1) NAP.1818/ 22 DIC (2, English) FPO/ JA. 9/1819 (3) JA.9/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.257-58, 279-80). (P.S. on folio 280.) PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 20. TEXT: From original letter.

## 62. Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

[Naples, January 24, 1819]

[P.S. by Mary] Direct your next letters to Rome— You have not yet sent us the name of the ship which brings the 2nd parcel— Be so kind as to enclose in the next a set [of] letters (counters) for William—

<sup>1</sup> Ingpen reads "Florristen"; he omits "Church" after "St. James" (Julian edition, X, 20).



ADDRESS: Impostata Gen 24/ Thos. L. Peacock, Esq./ New Hummums/ London/ Inghilterra, Angleterre. POSTMARKS: (1) NAP.18[19]/ 26 GE (2, English) FPO/ FE. 16/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 281-83); A.L.S., 5 pp. 4to. PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 28. TEXT: From original letter.

63. *To Maria Gisborne*Naples, Friday, Feb. 19th [26]<sup>1</sup>, 1819

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

We leave Naples Sunday next with the regret every one must feel at leaving so lovely a place— We are however going to Rome for 3 months and that idea is the only one that can compensate for quitting this beautiful country— Unfortunately it has happened that illness has confined Mr. Shelley a great deal to the house & it is only lately also that we have bought carriage horses so that we leave Naples just as we begin to feel its real value.

We have one consolation that we have visited most of the places to be *seen*—Pæstum—Pompeii—Herculaneum—Vesuvius—Baiae—Lago d'Agnano—Caccia d'Astroni—Caverto<sup>2</sup> &c—We have had generally favourable weather for our excursions except that to Pæstum & then it was not so bad as it might have been.

And what are you doing all this time— Still at Livorno— It must be a truly dismal place in the winter—any town in all Italy would be better but it is always the way when from the abstract fear of moving one puts off leaving a place for years (long years) one becomes entangled & cannot get out when one would—but for ever Livorno I hope not— We shall be at Florence in the summer—try to come there.

We have received our books & am obliged to you for the trouble you have taken. I fancy another box may have arrived by this time although we have not received the name of ship or captain but if Mr. G[isborne] would some day give a peep in at the custom house I should be infinitely obliged to him.

A sirocco has broken half the glass out our windows so I am very cold—our landlord (un vero birbante) wants to make us *pay*—is that fair? Adieu I hope you will write to me at Rome

Affectionately yours  
Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Kind Compts to Mr. G[isborne] & Mr. R[eveley]. If you want to read a *true* picture of Italians read the two last Chapters of Sismondi's history of the republics of the middle ages—they are very well written.

<sup>1</sup> The MS certainly reads the nineteenth, but it is equally certain that the correct date is the twenty-sixth, a week later, for: (1) the Shelleys left Naples on "Sunday next," the twenty-eighth; (2) the visit to Pæstum mentioned in paragraph 2 took place on the twenty-third; and (3) the letter has the Naples postmark, March 2.

<sup>2</sup> The dates of these excursions are: Herculaneum, December 5; Baiz, December 8; Vesuvius, December 16; Pompeii, December 22; Caverto, February 10; Lago d'Agnano, February 11; Caccia d'Astroni, February 11 and 14.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ La Signora Gisborne/ Via Genesi/ Fuore della Porta dei Capucini/ Livorno. POSTMARK: NAP. 1819/ 2. MAR. ENDORSED: Recd. 7 March. Ansd. 4 April. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.331-32); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 362-63; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 56. TEXT: From original letter.

64. *To Marianne Hunt*Corso—Rome<sup>1</sup>—March 12th 1819

My dear Marianne

You must have thought my silence long between our letters from Lucca & those from Naples— I wrote you a long one from Venice but the laudable love of gain (*buscare* as they call it—i.e. gaining their livelihood) which burns with zealous heat in the breast of every Italian caused the hotel keeper to charge the postage & to throw the letter into the fire together with several others— I wrote to you soon after the death of my little girl<sup>2</sup> which event I dare say Peacock has mentioned

We quitted Naples about a fortnight ago with great regret the country is the divinest in the world and as spring was just commencing it appeared that we left it when we just began to value it—but Rome repays for every thing — How you would like to be here! We pass our days in viewing the divinest statues in the world— You have seen the casts of most of them but the originals are infinitely superior & besides you continually see some new one—of heavenly beauty that one never saw before— There is an Apollo—it is Shelleys favourite—in the Museum of the Capitol he is standing leaning back with his feet crossed—one arm supports a lyre the other hand holds the instrument to play on it and his head is thrown back as he is in the act of being inspired and the expression of his countenance especially the lower part is more beautiful than you can imagine—There are a quantity of female figures in the attitude of the Venus di Medicis generally taller and slimmer than that little plump woman but I dare not say so graceful although I do not see how they can be surpassed— There is a Diana hunting—her dress girded about her—she has just let fly an arrow and watches its success with eagerness & joy. Nothing can be more venerable than the aspects of the statues of the river Gods that abound here—indeed it is a scene of perpetual enchantment to live in this thrice holy city—for add to these statues beautiful pictures and the fragments of magnificent architecture that meet your eye at every turn as you walk from one Street to another The other evening we visited the Pantheon by moonlight and saw the lovely sight of the moon appearing through the round aperture above & lighting the columns of the Rotonda with its rays. But my letter would never be at an end if I were to try [to] tell a millionth part of the delights of Rome—but it has such an effect on me that my past life before I saw it appears a blank & now I begin to live— In the churches you hear the music of heaven & the singing of Angels—

<sup>1</sup> They arrived in Rome on March 5.

<sup>2</sup> Clara, born at Marlow, September 2, 1817, died at Venice, September 24, 1818.

But how are you all this time—my dear girl— And how are all your children? We were very much amused by some Examiners that we received in Peacocks parcel although they were very old— We had Hunt's letter at Naples e[x]pressing all his doubts & difficulties about the proposed jour[ney]<sup>3</sup> — I am afraid indeed that you will decl[are it] impracticable although you both [would] be infinitely delighted At Naples there is a delightful opera although I do not know how you would like the Italian mode of managing it— They play the same opera for a year together and nothing is listened to of it except the favourite airs— Nothing is heard in Italy now but Rosini & he is no favourite of mine—he has some pretty airs—but they say that when he writes a good thing he goes on copying it in all his succeeding operas for ever and ever—he composes so much that he cannot always be called on for som[e]-thing pretty & new—

Shelley is *suffering* his cure—he is teased very much by the means but it certainly does him a great deal of good. William speaks more Italian than English— When he sees any thing he likes he cries O Dio che bella—

He has quite forgotten french for Elise<sup>4</sup> has left us— She married a rogue of an Italian servant [Paolo Foggi] that we had and turned Catholic— Venice quite spoiled her and she appears in the high road to be as Italian as any of them She has settled at Florence— Milly<sup>5</sup> stays with us & goes on very well except that during her exile her tender affection for *every thing* English makes her in love with every Englishman that she meets—

Adieu my dear Marianne— What modelling are you about? In stone or in what materials?— I dare say you wont understand this— Adieu keep yourself as well as you can & do not forget us—

Ever yours affectionately

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Shelley & Clare desire with me a thousand kind loves to Hunt & Bessy— Do you ever see Hogg—how he would scream & beat his sides at all the fine things in Rome—it is well that he is not [here] or he would have broken many a rib in his delights or at least bruised them sorely—

ADDRESS: Mrs. Leigh Hunt/ 8 York Buildings—New, Road/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (English): (1) FPO/AP. 3/ 1819 (2) 2 o'Clock/ AP. 3/ 1819 A.N.<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2741); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 54–58. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently Shelley had invited the Hunts to visit them in Naples, to which they intended to return, during the summer and winter of 1819. On March 9, 1819, Hunt wrote to Mary (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, Edited by his Eldest Son [London, Smith, Elder and Co., 1862, 2 vols.], I, 127): "But what, Hunt, of Italy?" Oh, you see, I delay speaking of Italy. I cannot come." The retirement of his brother John to the country and the necessity of his attendance at the *Examiner* office were his reasons.

<sup>4</sup> See Letter 52, note 3.

<sup>5</sup> The Marlow servant girl.

## 65. To Leigh Hunt

Rome

Teusday, April 6th 1819

My dear Hunt

Your long kind letter<sup>1</sup> was very welcome to us for it told us a little about you after a long ignorance— You seem in good spirits and I hope this is not meer appearance and that every thing is well with you—and that at least you see the end of your difficulties— To tell you the truth both Shelley and I thought that we left you free and had easy minds upon that score— So you still remember us & wish us back to England—and for your sake I wish that we were there but I fear on our return to be enveloped not only in a bodily but a mental cloudy atmosphere whose simoonic wind sometimes contrives to reach us even in this country of sunshine—so we have determined & very soon we shall not be able to change our determination to stay here another year— In a couple of months we shall return to Naples where circumstances will keep us a long time and we shall be in Rome again at this time next year<sup>2</sup>— You cannot come you say—indeed I always feared that you could not but you would like Italy very much—so if you feel enclined some cold day next autumn take ship and come & find us on the shores of the bay of Naples enjoying a brighter sun than ever peers through the mists of your England

I suppose that Peacock shews you Shelley's letters so I need not describe those objects which delight us so much here— We live surrounded by antiquity ruined and perfect besides seeing the lovely pictures of your favourite Raphael who is the Prince or rather God of painting (I mean a heathen God not a bungling modern divinity) and there are delightful painters besides him Guido would be a great favourite of yours— You would not like Domenichino so well, he is so fond of painting that scapegoat of all that is shrivelled & miserable in human nature Saint Jerolymo but there are some very beautiful pictures of his— And then you know Rome is stuffed with the loveliest statues in the world—a much greater number than one has any idea of untill one sees them and most of them in the most perfect state:—besides our eternal visits to these divine objects—Clare is learning singing—I painting & S[helley] is writing a poem<sup>3</sup> so that the *belle arte* take up all our time— Swiny<sup>4</sup> ought to be here to see the statues— We took our Will-man to the Vatican & he was delighted with the Goats & the Cavalli and dolefully lamented over the *man sotto* which is his kind of language

Your account of your nephew Henry interested us very much it shews a very generous nature to undertake the cause of the absent especially one so

<sup>1</sup> Of March 9; printed in *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 126–30.

<sup>2</sup> Mary saw neither Rome nor Naples again until 1843.

<sup>3</sup> *Prometheus Unbound*, which Shelley finished at Rome, except for the fourth act, added later as an afterthought.

<sup>4</sup> Swinburne, Hunt's young son.

little known as Shelley is to him<sup>5</sup>— Pray convey Shelleys thanks to him and let us know if his health is improved— We must thank you also for your delicacy about meeting the Turnurs<sup>6</sup>— These people are very strange; but I always understood that their distaste to us originated with Alfred Boinville and he it seems is not of the present party—but Turnur is a bad envious man & a slanderer so if we saw them we should at least keep a kind of barrier in the way of intimacy Mrs. Boinville is a very delightful woman but has the unhappy knack of either forgetting or appearing to forget her friends as soon as they turn their backs—

You seem certain that Southey did not write the number in the quarterly<sup>7</sup> but if he spares us in print he does not in conversation as we have good authority to know and that he speaks in the grossest manner—but this is all nothing—

So you would put in a word with me about Hogg (& Polypheme also—I do not know if you think they are alike but I believe that the gentleman does himself—but I have written a book in defence of Polypheme have I not?) — You say that you *think* that he has a good heart<sup>8</sup>—and so do I—but who can be sure of it—he wraps himself up in a triple veil—and places or appears to place a high wall between himself & his fellows— This want of confidence & frankness must in its natural course be repaid by a kind of mistrust—and that—with his manners which when unrelieved by the presence of half a dozen people, always disgust me make him as a constant daily-hourly visitor, which he insists upon being with us, absolutely intolerable— I hope when we return we shall be out of the reach of any but his sunday visits.

Shelley's doctor (not an Italian, they never do any good) has been of service to him & I hope that he will be of more but the bright sun of this blue sky is of more use than a myriad of medecines & a cold day (we have none of them now) casts him back— The rest of us are well— If it is not that I suffer from ill spirits—God knows why but I have suffered more from them ten times

<sup>5</sup> Hunt had written (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, 1, 127): "The other day he [Henry Hunt, son of John Hunt] surprised a company at his father's with starting earnestly into conversation, his face all on fire, and making a zealous defence of Shelley, whom some foolish person attacked. When he had done, he apologized for being so loud and abrupt, but 'my uncle,' he said, 'admires and loves Mr. Shelley, and this alone should excuse me'; upon which his father added with evident delight, 'My dear boy, you could not have done better'. . . . I think it was Coulson who told me."

<sup>6</sup> Cornelia Turner was the married daughter of Mrs. Boinville, Alfred Boinville, her son. Shelley was on intimate terms with this family in 1813. (For a lengthy discussion of the Boinvilles, see Dowden, I, 378–83.) Hunt wrote to Mary (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 129): "Mr. Turner called on him [Peacock] the other day, and invited him and Hogg to dinner with his wife at Kensington. Peacock asked me if I had any objection to meet them at his lodgings to dinner. I said I had, because . . . [I] would never meet a person who would not meet Shelley; but Hogg says they are now very desirous of seeing him, and so my grandeur relented, and I shall shortly, perhaps, have to give you an account of our confronting."

<sup>7</sup> Shelley thought for a while that the outrageous review of *The Revolt of Islam* in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1819, was by Southey. The author, though Shelley never knew it, was John Taylor Coleridge.

<sup>8</sup> Hunt wrote (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 129): "Hogg and Peacock generally live here every Sunday. . . . Hogg, I think, has a good heart as well as wit."

over than I ever did before I came to Italy evil thoughts will hang about me— but this is only now and then—

Give our loves to the Darling of Aix la Chapelle—she never writes & never will I dare say although I have written to her several times but of course she has more to do than ever—y[et] of an evening she might—as she has before now gossip a little with me— Our best remembrances to Bessy and our friends that you may chance to see— God knows when we shall see them if some chances came about it might be in 3 months but it will not be so I promise you;<sup>9</sup> so wait another year and still till I date Rome April 1820 and then we may see some glimmering—

It is a long time since we have heard from Venice—but all goes on as badly there with the noble poet<sup>10</sup> as ever I fear—he is a lost man if he does not escape soon— Allegra is there with a friend of his and ours & if fortune will so favour us things shall remain as they are concerning her another year but I fear we shall be obliged to move—it is a long story and as usual people have behaved ill but do not mention these things in your letters— Adio— The Romans speak better Italian & have softer voices than their countrymen— Keep yourself well & walk out every day—we do—

Affectionately yours

Mary W S.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq-/ York Building—New Road/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (English): (1) FPO/ AP. 24/ 1819 (2) 12 o'Clock/ AP. 24/ 1819 N<sup>n</sup>. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2742); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Letters*, 58–66. TEXT: From original letter.

## 66. Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock

Rome,

April 6, 1819

[P.S. by Mary] The date of your last letter received by us is Jan. 31st—it is the 16th You have been a long time without writing— Pray tell me how Marianne St. Croix is?<sup>1</sup>

ADDRESS: Thos. Peacock Esq-/ 5 York St. Covent Garden/ London/ Angleterre Inghilterra. POSTMARK (English): FPO/ AP. 27/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.287–89); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to, with seal. (Mary's P.S. on f.287, at top of page 1.) PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 49. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>9</sup> Throughout his stay in Italy, Shelley expected at any time to be recalled to England by his father's death.

<sup>10</sup> Byron. Allegra was cared for by Mr. and Mrs. Hoppner.

<sup>1</sup> Peacock's connection with Miss Marianne de St. Croix is still rather mysterious. Peacock's biographer, Carl Van Doren, was vaguely aware of her existence, but could not identify her except as Marianne. A brief assembly of the facts and of the conclusions to be drawn from them may be worth while.

According to Van Doren (Carl Van Doren, *The Life of Thomas Love Peacock* [London, J. M. Dent & Sons, 1911], 229), Peacock was on intimate terms with a St. Croix family at Chertsey, Peacock's childhood home. Marianne de St. Croix was doubtless of this family. She was in love with Peacock as early as 1814 and as late as 1819 and wished to marry him; and evidently Peacock had given her reason to hope, though he seems to have been an inconstant lover.

Some odd entries in Mary Shelley's journal for January and April, 1814, show not only Miss

## 67. To Maria Gisborne

Rome

Monday, April 26th, 1819

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

We already begin to feel or think that we begin to feel the effects of the Roman air—producing colds—depression & even fever to the feeblest of our party, so we emigrate a month earlier than we intended—and on the seventh of May leave this delightful city for the Bay of Naples intending if possible to settle for some months at Castel del Mare— The physicians prognosticate good effects to Shelley from a Neapolitan summer—he has been very unwell lately & is very far from well now—but I hope that he is getting up again.

Yesterday evening I met at a conversazione the true model of Biddy Fudge's lover—an Englishman with "the dear Corsair expression half savage half soft"—with the beautiful mixture of "Abelard & old Blucher"—& his forehead "rather bald but so warlike" and his mustachios on which the lamp shone with as fine an effect as the sun did upon Biddy's Hero—that when I heard his [name] called Signore Colonello I could not refrain a smile which nearly degenerated into laughter when I thought that we had Colonel Calicot [Finch] in Rome— Presently he began in very good Italian which although Englishly pronounced yet is better spoken than any other Englishman that I have heard—to give an account of his warlike feats and how at Lisbon he had put to flight thirty well armed & well mounted robbers (he on foot) with two pistols that never missed their aim— There can be but one such man in the world as you will be convinced when I tell you that while I was admiring his extraordinary prowess Clare whispered to me *It is Colonel Finch*— You

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St. Croix's affection for Peacock, but also that Peacock had for a short time yielded to the charms of a "rich heiress" named Charlotte and was actually living with her in extra-marital relationship, much to the distress of Miss St. Croix and without the entire approval of Shelley. The heiress quickly proved to be no heiress at all, but not before Peacock had contracted debts which he evidently expected his wealthy lover to pay. For these he was thrown into prison for a time. Mary's journal entry for April 17 rather suggests that Peacock was so much upset by these misfortunes that he contemplated going to Canada and taking with him his faithful Marianne de St. Croix. But he did not go, and eventually destroyed all Marianne's hopes of marriage by wedding Jane Gryffydd on March 22, 1820. Shelley's letter of May 16, 1820, to Peacock, and Mary Shelley's letter of November 24, 1819 (Letter 78), to Mrs. Hunt, furnish further interesting comments upon the unhappy Marianne de St. Croix.

The following extracts from Mary's journal are taken from *Shelley and Mary*: "*Thursday, Dec. 1, [1814].* Expect Marianne de St. Croix; she does not come—*grace au Dieu.*" (I, 50.) "*Tuesday, Dec. 6.* In the evening an affecting or affected letter from Miss Marianne de St. Croix." (I, 51.) "*Monday, Jan. 2, [1815].* Letter from Marianne; very affecting; wishing to see Shelley." (I, 60.) "*Monday, Jan. 3.* Shelley goes to Marianne; hears, to his great surprise, that a rich heiress has fallen in love with Peacock, and lives with him; she is very miserable; God knows why. Shelley is, on her account and that of Miss de St. Croix, who is miserable on her own account. [There seem to be two Mariannes here.] Talk over Peacock's adventure; Shelley writes to him in the evening." (I, 60.) "*Wednesday, Jan. 4.* Letter from Marianne." (I, 60. Several leaves are torn from the journal after January 7.) "*Thursday, Jan. 12.* Letter from Peacock to say that he is in prison; the foolish man lived up to Charlotte's expectations, who turns out to have nothing. Her behaviour is inexplicable. There is a terrible mystery in the affair. His debt is 40 l. A letter also from Gray, who knows nothing about her. . . . Write to Peacock, and send him 2 l." (I, 61–62.) "*Monday, April 17.* Peacock comes; tells of his plan of going to Canada, and taking Marianne; talk of it after dinner." (I, 74.)

asked me to tell you what I had heard of him at Venice—only one or two shabby tricks two [*sic*] long for a letter & that an officer who served in Spain of the same regiment to which he pretends to belong vows that there was no Col[o]nel Finch there—report says that he is a parson & Lord B[yron]'s nickname for his particular friend is the *Reverend Colonel Finch*<sup>1</sup>—

We have been very gay in Rome as I dare [say] you have heard with the visit of the Emperor of Austria who they whisper wishes to take the Roman states into the keeping of the holy Roman Empire—this would be a fall to say the least of it from nothingness to Hell— There was a feast given at the Capitol—the three palaces were joined by a gallery and the whole hung with silk and illuminated in the most magnificent manner & the dying Gladiator surrounded by his Apollo's & Venuses shone forth very beautifully— There were very fine fire works—& a supper not at all in the Italian taste for there was an abundance which did honour to the old Cardinal who superintended the fête—every one was pleased & the Romans in extacies— I have not room to tell you how gracefully the old venerable Pope fulfilled the Church ceremonies—or how surprised & delighted we were with the lighting up of St. Peters—all that must serve for gossip when we meet— When will that be?—

We saw nobody at Naples—but we see a few people here— The Italian character does not improve upon us— By the bye we have given an introduction for you (which I do not think will be presented) to a Roman lady, a painter and authoress, very old, very miserly & very mean—a Sig[no]ra Dionigi<sup>2</sup> perhaps you knew her— She says that she thinks that she remembers your name—

I am in better health & spirits than when I last wrote & make no ceremony of writing without receiving answers— S[helley] & Clare desire best remembrances—

Affectionately Ys.

M W S.

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Colonel Calicot Finch, always a mystery to Shelley students, has been fully identified by Miss Elizabeth Nitchie, whose *The Reverend Colonel Finch* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1940) gives the history of this extraordinary man. He was Robert Finch (1783–1830), M.A. of Balliol College, Oxford, parson, traveler, scholar, antiquary, and philanthropist. The military title was assumed by Finch, who nevertheless doggedly defended his right to it. The name "Calicot" was given to him by the Shelleys, who borrowed it from Thomas Moore's *The Fudge Family in Paris*, where it appears as the name of Biddy Fudge's lover. Though a mendacious and half-comical figure, Finch knew many people of distinction and commanded much respect. The Gisbornes, Leigh Hunt, Joseph Severn, Crabb Robinson, T. J. Hogg, and Charles Brown were among his correspondents. It was Finch's letter to Mr. Gisborne describing the death of Keats at Rome that gave Shelley his first information on the subject. The Bodleian Library has a large collection of Finch manuscripts and relics. (See Letter 87.)

<sup>2</sup> A catty remark, for the Signora Marianna Dionigi was really a person of distinction, and, as Mary's journal shows, was very kind to the Shelleys. They were for a while frequently honored by her society. Born in 1756 and dying in 1826, she was the author of several books, the principal ones being *Le Regole elementare della Pittura de' Paesi* (1816), and *Sulle cinque città del Lazio che diconsi fondate da Saturno* (Dowden, II, 255n). Mary's journal for Sunday, April 25, reads (*Shelley and Mary*, II, 374): "Spend the evening with Signora Dionigi, and see Colonel Calicot Finch."



[P.S.] We expect with little hope but many wishes your answer concerning your visit to Naples— Pray come if it is not *impossible & give very little* latitude to that word—

I can hardly tell you what to do about directing our letters—for a week or ten days have the kindness to direct them to Naples & after that perhaps you had better keep them till we write.

Did you not say that you knew a herb for the destruction of fleas—be so kind as to send us its name.

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.333-34); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 112-14 (omits postscript.); *Shelley and Mary*, II, 374-76; Dowden, II, 255, 259 (quots., 14 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 56-58. TEXT: From original letter.

## 68. To Maria Gisborne

[Rome,] April 27, [1819]

We have just received Mr. Gisborne's letter with the dreaded but expected refusal— If you must waste away 2 or 4 years cannot you spare a few months out of that time— You will say no—& yet I think that you might say yes— Will you?

The Tale you mention of Lord Byron's is on the same subject as one that he commenced in Switzerland and I little doubt therefore but that the information is true<sup>1</sup>— I shall be very curious to see it— I know the story of it already which is very dramatic & striking— And I dare say that we shall like it better than the poetry in which he is engaged at present<sup>2</sup> which is in the Beppo style— What a miserable thing it is that he should be lost as he is among the worst inhabitants of Venice—

Well I am afraid that we shall not see you this year which is a very great disappointment to us especially as at Castel a Mare we shall most likely live a solitary life & not see a single *creature*—so take pity on us if you can—

Most affectionately Ys.

M W Shelley

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Poste Restante/ Livorno. POSTMARK: 2 MAGGIO. ENDORSED: Recd.— Ansd. 17 May. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.335); A.L.S., 1 p. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 372 (dated April 8); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 58. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> The tale referred to is that which was sketched by Byron in Switzerland in 1816 after the Shelleys and he had agreed that each was to write a ghost story. Mary's *Frankenstein* was the only story completed. From Byron's sketch Dr. John W. Polidori, Byron's youthful physician, eventually completed the story. It was entitled *The Vampyre* and was published by Henry Colburn in *The New Monthly Magazine* for April, 1819; also in pamphlet form, as by Byron. It is evidently to the *New Monthly* publication that Mary Shelley alludes. The full and correct history of this tale is given by W. M. Rossetti in his edition of *The Diary of Dr. John W. Polidori, 1816* (London, E. Mathews, 1911), 11-24.

<sup>2</sup> *Don Juan*.

## 69. To Maria Gisborne

Rome,  
Sunday, May 30th, 1819

My Dear Mrs. Gisborne—

Another letter—another plan— You will think us strange people— We leave Rome tomorrow week. We take a veterino—to where?—To Lucca. We shall see you this summer— I hope you will be glad of this—

Several reasons have joined to force us to this— The Surgeon who is to attend on me<sup>1</sup> follows the Princess Paulina Borghese to the Baths of Lucca & will be either at Pisa or Florence at the time we want him— Besides this what weighs more with us is that the heat of this southern climate disagrees with William— He has had a dangerous attack of worms and it is only yesterday & today that he is convalescent— We are advised above all things to pass the summer in as cool a place as possible— We have turned our eyes therefore to the Baths of Lucca & if we cannot get a house there we shall about the town of Lucca or the Baths of Pisa— Pray is the latter a cool place or not?

We shall therefore I trust see you all this summer— Indeed you must come to console us for quitting Rome which we do with the greatest regret— However we must & shall return there— We shall most likely spend the winter a[t] Pisa a place recommended particularly for Shelley's health.

Now we have one favour to ask you in this which is to procure us a servant— I think it had better be a woman since we must necessarily remain for some time about the same place— Perhaps the same Caterina you thought of before— She or He must cook tolerably since a chance might allow us to see people— They must market as honestly as an Italian can— If she could iron it would be a very great & almost a necessary convenience to us— I should not want her to wash— The wages you will judge yourself—as they would not quit Tuscany except to go to Lucca I should think 2 seq. a month enough but you will see— The servant must eat in the house— I have a very great objection to board wages—

I cannot tell you how glad we shall be to see you again— We should like of all things to have a house near you by the seaside at Livorno but the heat would frighten me for William who is so very delicate—and we must take the greatest possible care of him this summer— We shall at least be within reach of a good English Physician & we have the most rooted contempt & in any case of illness the greatest dread of Italian *Medicos*.

Of course you will send us no more letters— If William's illness causes us to retard our journey we will write but I think we may pr[omise] that [we] shall set out Sunday 7th of June. We sh[all] be six days on our journey so on Saturday the 13th let us find at the *Croce di Malta* at Lucca our servant wait-

<sup>1</sup> At the birth of her child (Percy Florence, born at Florence on November 12, without the help of this physician).

70 : JUNE 3, 1819

*The Letters of*

ing for us— I hope you will not have much trouble in this and I ought to make you many apologies for teasing you so much—but your kindness makes us bold as we trust your goodness as we should to friends of many years standing.

You will exceedingly oblige us if you will write to us by this servant to say if you think the baths of Pisa very hot or if you know of any place about Lucca that would do for us—and if you could favour us with any kind of introduction at Lucca—

Adieu—my dear Mrs. Gisborne— Give our kindest remembrances to Mess. G[isborne] & R[eveley] & believe me

Most affectionately Yours

Mary W Shelley

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Poste Restante/ Livourne. POSTMARK. 6 GIUGNO. ENDORSED: Recd. 11 June. ANSD. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 336–37); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 379–80; Dowden, II, 267 (quot., 4 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 63 (1929), 58–59. TEXT: From original letter.

70. *Claire Clairmont and Mary Shelley to Maria Gisborne*<sup>1</sup>

Rome,

Thursday, June 3rd, 1819

Dear Mrs. Gisborne

Mary tells me to write for her for she is very unwell and also afflicted. Our poor little William is at present very ill and it will be impossible to quit Rome so soon as we intended— She begs you therefore to forward the letters here and still to look for a Servant for her as she certainly intends coming to Pisa— She will write to you a day or two before we set out. William has a complaint of the Stomach but fortunately he is attended by Mr. Bell who is reckoned even in London one of the first English Surgeons. I know you will be glad to hear that both Mary & Mr. Shelley would be well in health were it not for the dreadful anxiety they now suffer.

[Unsigned]

June 5th

[Added by Mary] William is in the greatest danger— We do not quite despair yet we have the least possible reason to hope— Yesterday he was in the convulsions of death and he was saved from them— Yet we dare not must not hope—

<sup>1</sup> The first part of this letter has always been assigned to Miss Amelia Curran. Her signature is affixed to it in *Shelley and Mary* (II, 381) and Marshall (Mrs. Julian Marshall, *The Life and Letters of Mary W. Shelley* [London, Richard Bentley & Son, 1889, 2 vols.], I, 242); but the original letter has no signature at all. Both the contents of the letter ("it will be impossible to quit Rome so soon as we intended") and Mrs. Gisborne's endorsement ("C.C. & M.W.S.") prove conclusively that Claire Clairmont wrote the first half of the letter.

I will write as soon as any change takes place— The misery of these hours is beyond calculation— The hopes of my life are bound up in him<sup>2</sup>—

Ever yours affectionately

M W S.

[P.S.] I am well and so is S[helley] although he is more exhausted by watching than I am. William is in a high fever

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Poste Restante/ Livourne. POSTMARK: 16 GIUGNO. ENDORSED: Recd. 16 June. Ans. CC. & M.W.S. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 292–93); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 381–82; Dowden, II, 267 (Mary's part only); Marshall, I, 241–42. (*Shelley and Mary* and Marshall erroneously assign first part to Miss Amelia Curran.) TEXT: From original letter.

### 71. To Miss Amelia Curran<sup>3</sup>

Leghorn,<sup>4</sup>

June 27, 1819

My dear Miss Curran

I wrote you twice on our journey and again from this place but I found the other day that Shelley had forgotten [*sic*] to send the latter—and I have been so unwell with a cold these last two or three days that I have not been able to write.

We have taken an airy house here in the vicinity of Leghorn for three months and we have not found it yet too hot—the country around us is pretty so that I dare say that we shall do very well—

I am going to write another stupid letter to you—yet what can I do—I no sooner take up my pen than my thoughts run away with me & I cannot guide it except about *one* subject & that I must avoid— So I entreat you to join this to your many other kindnesses & to excuse me—I have received the two letters forwarded from Rome— My father's lawsuit<sup>5</sup> is put off untill July— It will never be terminated—

I hope that you have quitted the pestilential air of Rome & have gained a little health in the country— Pray let us hear from you for both Shelley & I are very anxious—more than I can express—to know how you are. Let us

<sup>2</sup> William, three years old, died on June 7 and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome. In 1822 when Shelley was buried in the same cemetery, William's grave could not be found; nor is its exact position known to this day.

<sup>3</sup> Daughter of John Philpot Curran, the Irish statesman. Shelley had met her at Godwin's house in 1812. She was an artist of some talent and was in Rome while the Shelleys were there in 1819. During that time she was constantly in their society, and she painted portraits of all of them: Shelley, Mary, William, and Claire. Her portrait of Shelley, though declared both by Miss Curran and Mary to be a poor likeness, is the one by which Shelley is best known. It was treasured for many years by Mary and later by Lady Jane Shelley and was eventually presented to the National Portrait Gallery. Miss Curran died at Rome on August 30, 1847. (See Julian edition, VIII, xvii.) Mary's efforts to secure the portrait from Miss Curran after Shelley's death will be found in the letters of 1822–26.

<sup>4</sup> The Shelleys left Rome on June 10 and arrived in Leghorn on the seventeenth. After a week there, where they saw the Gisbornes often, they removed to Villa Valsovano, an airy house near the sea and about halfway between Leghorn and Monte Nero. Here Shelley wrote *The Cenci*.

<sup>5</sup> Godwin had been sued for the accumulated rent on his house in Skinner Street. The suit was long drawn out, but eventually was decided against him.

hear also if you please—anything you may have done about the tomb—near which I shall lie one day & care not—for my own sake—how soon— I never shall recover that blow—I feel it more now than at Rome—the thought never leaves me for a single moment— Everything on earth has lost its interest to me.

You see I told you than [that] I could only write to you on one subject how can I since do all I can (& I endeavour very sincerely) I can think of no other—so I will leave off—

Shelley is tolerably well & desires his kindest remembrances—

Most Affectionately yours,

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Direct here—Ferma in Posta, Livorno—& Pray write soon—and tell us of your painting & your occupations.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora Curran/ 64 Via Sistina/ Roma. POSTMARK: LIVORNO.  
ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.338–39); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 382–83; Dowden, II, 271 (quot., 8 lines); Marshall, I, 249–50 (omits postscript.). TEXT: From original letter.

## 72. To Marianne Hunt

Leghorn—June 29th 1817 [1819]

My dear Marianne

Although we have not heard from you or of you for some time I hope you are going on well—that you enjoy [y]our health and see your children lively about you—

You see by our hap how blind we mortals are when we go seeking after what we think our good— We came to Italy thinking to do Shelley's health good—but the Climate is not [by] any means warm enough to be of benefit to him & yet it is that that has destroyed my two children— We went from England comparatively prosperous & happy—I should return broken hearted & miserable— I never know one moments ease from the wretchedness and despair that possesses me— May you my dear Marianne never know what it is to loose two only & lovely children in one year—to watch their dying moments—& then at last to be left childless & for ever miserable

It is useless complaining & I shall therefore only write a short letter for as all my thoughts are nothing but misery it is not kind to transmit them to you—

Since Shelley wrote to Hunt we have taken a house in the neighbourhood of Leghorn be so kind as to inform Peacock of this—and that he must direct us to Ferma in Posta, Livorno & to let us know whether he has sent any letter to Florence— I am very anxious to know whether or not I am to receive the clothes<sup>1</sup> I wrote to you about—for if we do not I must provide others and although that will be a great expense & trouble yet it would be better for me to know as soon as possible if any one can or will send them— Peacock seems

<sup>1</sup> Baby clothes, which would be needed at the birth of Percy Florence in November.

too much taken up in his new occupations<sup>2</sup> to think about us, & he unfortunately is the only person whom I can have the slightest hope would do such a thing— If you would write to let me know whether you have them or indeed what you know about them it would exceedingly oblige me—but I know that your domestic concerns leave you no time therefore I do not expect that you can do me this favour I wish I had brought them with me—but one can only learn by experience how slowly & badly every thing is done for the absent— Do not think that I reproach you by these words—I know that you can do nothing and who else is there that would care for my convenience or inconvenience—

I am sorry to write to you all about these petty affairs—[y]et if I would write anythin[g] else about myself it would only be a list of hours spent [in] tears & grief— Hunt used to call me serious w[hat] would he say to me now—I feel that I am no[t] fit for any thing & therefore not fit to live but how must that heart be moulded which would not be broken by what I have suffered—William was so good so beautiful so entirely attached to me— To the last moment almost he was in such abounding health & spirits—and his malady appeared of so slight a nature—and as arising simply from worms inspired no fear of danger that the blow was as sudden as it was terrible— Did you ever know a child with a fine colour—wonderful spirits—breeding worms (and those of the most innocent kind) that would kill him in a fortnight— We had a most excellent English surgeon<sup>3</sup> to attend him & he allowed that these were the fruits of this hateful Italy—

But all this is all nothing to any one but myself & I wish that I were incapable of feeling that or any other sorrow— Give my love to Hunt keep yourselves well and happy.

Yours

M W Shelley

[P.S.] If the child's things are not sent at least as soon as this letter arrives they will come too late but if I had hopes that any one would take the trouble to send them at last—I would only make up the things perfectly necessary in expectation of the others

ADDRESS: Mrs. Hunt/ 8. York Buildings/ New Road/ London/ Angleterre.  
POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2, English) FPO/ JY. 17/ 1819 (3) 12 o'Clock/ JY. 17/ 1819 N<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2745); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 66–69. TEXT: From original letter.

### 73. To Marianne Hunt

Leghorn—, August 28—1819

My dear Marianne

We are very dull at Leghorn and I can therefore write nothing to amuse

<sup>2</sup> In 1819 Peacock received an appointment in the East India Company, which he served until 1856, when he retired on a pension of £1333 a year.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Bell, an English physician with whom the Shelleys became fairly intimate in Rome.

you— We live in a little country house at the end of a green lane surrounded by a *podère* these *podère* are just the things Hunt would like—they are like our kitchen gardens with the difference only that the beautiful fertility of this country gives them—a large bed of cabages is very unpicturesque in England—but here the furrows are alternated with rows of grapes festooned on their supporters—it is filled with olive, fig and peach trees and the hedges are of myrtle which have just ceased to flower—their flower has the sweetest faint smell in the world like some delicious spice—green grassy walks lead you through the vines—the people are always busy—and it [is] pleasant to see three or four of them transform in one day a bed of indian corn to one of celery—they work this hot weather in their shirts or smock frocks (but their breasts are bare) their brown legs nearly the colour only with a rich tinge of red in it with the earth they turn up— They sing not very melodiously but very loud—Rossini's music, *Mi revedrai, ti revedro* and they are accompanied by the *cicala* a kind of little beetle that makes a noise with its tail as loud as Johnny<sup>1</sup> can sing—they live on trees and three or four together are enough to deafen you—it is to the *cicala* that Anacreon has addressed an ode which they call to a grasshopper in the English translations

Well here we live— I never am in good spirits—often in very bad—and Hunt's portrait<sup>2</sup> has already seen me shed so many tears that if it had his heart as well as his eyes he would weep too to [*sic*] in pity—but no more of this or a tear will come now, and there is no use for that—

By the bye a hint Hunt gave about portraits—the Italian painter's are very bad—they might make a nose like Shelleys & perhaps a mouth—but I doubt it; but there would be no expression [about] it— They have no notion of any thing except copying again and again their old masters—and somehow mere copying however divine the original does a great deal more harm than good—

Shelley has written a good deal and I have done very little since I have been in Italy— I have had so much to see—and so many vexations—independant of those which God has kindly sent to wean me from the world if I were too fond of it— S[helley] has not had good health by any means—and when getting better fate has ever contrived something to pull him back—he never was better than the last month of his stay in Rome except the last week—then he watched 60 miserable—deathlyke hours<sup>3</sup> without closing his eyes & you may think what good that did him—

We see the examiners regularly now four together just two months after the publication of the last—these are very delightful to us— I have a word

<sup>1</sup> Leigh Hunt's child.

<sup>2</sup> In her journal for Friday, August 20, Mary notes: "We receive Hunt's picture."

The portrait—"as large as life," says Mrs. Hunt—"is apparently no longer in existence. It was a half-length chalk drawing by Wildman, Thornton Hunt's drawing-master."—Julian edition, X, 75n.

<sup>3</sup> By the bedside of his dying child, William.

to say to Hunt of what he says concerning Italian dancing—the Italians dance very badly—they dress for their dances in the ugliest manner—the men in little doublets with a hat and feather—they are very stiff—nothing but their legs move—and they twirl and jump with as ill grace as may be—it is not for their dancing but their pantomime that the Italians are famous— You remember what we told you of the ballêt of Othello<sup>4</sup>—they tell a story by action so that words appear perfectly superfluous things for them— In that they are graceful—agile impressive & very affecting so that I delight in nothing so much as a deep tragic ballêt—but the dancing—unless as they sometimes do—they dance as common people—for instance the dance of joy of the Venetian citizens on the return of Othello—is very bad indeed—

I am very much obliged to you for all your kind offers and wishes— Hunt would do Shelley a great deal of good—but that we may not think of— His spirits are tolerably good— But you do not tell me how you get on— How Bessy is & where she is— Remember me to her— Clare is learning thorough base—and singing—we pay 4 crowns a month for her master—lessons 3 times a week—cheap work this—is it not—at Rome we pay 3 shillings a lesson & the master stayed two hours— The one we have now is the best in Leghorn — I write in the morning—read latin till two when we dine—then I read some English book & two cantos of Dante with Shelley— In the evening our friends the Gisbornes come so we are not perfectly alone— I like Mrs. Gisborne very much indeed but her husband is most dreadfully dull and as he is always with her we have not so much pleasure in her company as we otherwise should— Her son<sup>5</sup> is the pattern of good boys— Thornton & Johnny should take pattern by him—he is only thirty [*sic*] years of age and always does as he is bid—this is no exaggeration although that age he is under as complete a subordination as few boys of twelve are—this however is all to his praise for he is very clever—and he ought to . . .

[I hope you ha]ve sent the things I wrote for<sup>6</sup> or will without delay—for indeed I need them—if you have not slip in a pair of baby's stays for a pattern—but pray send them immediately and what is of as much consequence send me the bill of lading the moment you get it—you know that I shall be in the most wretched state ever poor woman was if you do not let me have them.

I am obliged to Hunt for his page of excuses—give my love to him and tell him that I vote that for the future he should follow Boccaccio's example who always makes his people begin *prestamente* their tales without any excuses at all— Tell him that I read that most delightful author at Rome—and that his letter joined to my recommendations has persuaded Shelley to begin him—he is now reading him regularly through and is quite enchanted by his mixture of hilarity and Pathos—

<sup>4</sup> Which they saw at Milan in April, 1818 (see Letter 49).

<sup>5</sup> Henry Reveley.

<sup>6</sup> The baby clothes.



I call this a long letter— Will Hunt call it a *gigantic paragraph*<sup>7</sup> and pray what does he mean.

POSTMARK (English): FPO/ SE. 11/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Stark Collection, University of Texas, has 4 pp. 4to in Mary's autograph; at top of page 1 is the word "Copy", apparently in Mary's hand. A part of the original MS (beginning "[I hope you ha]ve sent the things . . .") is owned by Lady Dorothea Charnwood.\* PRINTED: Stark Collection portion only: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt* I, 142-44; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 397-99; Dowden, II, 213n, 271 (quots., 4 & 5 lines); Marshall, I, 251-53; *Letters*, 69-73; R. B. Johnson, *Shelley—Leigh Hunt* (1928), 118-20. Lady Charnwood portion: in her *Call Back Yesterday* (2nd ed. 1938), 201. TEXT: Mary Shelley's copy in Stark Collection and (for last part) Lady Charnwood's *Call Back Yesterday*.

## 74. To Miss Amelia Curran

Leghorn,  
Sept. 18, 1819.

My dear Miss Curran

We certainly lost your first letter concerning the engraving of La Cenci so perhaps some good person is at work for us here as well as at Rome— I am sorry that you have had so much trouble especially as it is in vain—of course if the two years were not inadmissible a 1000 sequins would be— What Shelley thought of was an engraving of a fit size to place as a frontispiece to his tragedy<sup>1</sup> but he has now given up the thought of its being done in Italy, as we trust to your copy—which you know you are to do very beautifully for us—it will be doing us both a very great favour—

We shall quit Leghorn in about a fortnight but as yet we do not know where we go— The autumn here is very delightful & not at all too hot— We are so much more north than you— I regret this for I regret Rome & God knows when we shall see it again—not this winter for we cannot stir before it will be too cold for travelling—not in the summer for then we shall not seek so hot a residence—the next winter is a possible thing—but then I fear you will be thinking of returning to England

<sup>7</sup> In July, 1819, Hunt had written: "I shall despatch another letter next week addressed to Mary, which I hope will induce her to oblige me with one of those gigantic paragraphs which she entitles a letter." (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 132.) Hunt's reply to this letter (*Ibid.*, I, 145-47) contains the explanation: "I will tell you, Marina, what I mean by 'gigantic paragraphs': short letters written in large characters. . . . Thus you write a long letter, it is true, but not a full one. The characters I write in are like the devils in Pandæmonium, who shrunk themselves to pigmies that they might all get in; yours are the leaders of them, in secret conclave, —mightier but not so numerous." (See *Paradise Lost*, I, 777-98.)

<sup>1</sup> Shelley had finished *The Cenci* at Leghorn on August 8. He wrote it with the express purpose of its stage production, and wished to have Miss O'Neil, whom he had seen on the stage in London and had greatly admired, act the leading role of Beatrice. He had two hundred fifty copies printed in Italy, his double purpose being (1) a correct text and (2) a more readable text for the management of Covent Garden, who he hoped would produce the play. Thinking that his name, if associated with the tragedy, would cause it to be refused, he took great pains to conceal the authorship. Not even did Leigh Hunt, to whom the printed play was dedicated, know that Shelley had written a play. The printed copies were sent to Ollier with emphatic orders not to open the box until Peacock gave instructions. The play was refused by Covent Garden, and the printed copies were published by Ollier in 1820. As Mary's letter shows, Shelley desired to have an engraved portrait of the so-called Guido picture of Beatrice Cenci as a frontispiece, but had to give up the idea because of time and expense.

Nothing more has been said about the tomb<sup>2</sup>— We still encline to a pyramid as the most durable of simple monumental forms— When you return to Rome do not be angry with me for requesting you to inform yourself of the following particulars— What would be the size of a pyramid built of the most solid materials & covered with white marble at the price of £25 sterl[ing]—and also what would be the size of an obelisk built in the same manner & at the same price? When we know these things I think we can decide— You are so kind that you see I trouble you without ceremony & hope that you will accept our thanks & gratitude without being angry with us for the trouble we give you— I wish all the people that we depend upon were as good as you are—the most pressing entreaties on my part as well as Clares cannot draw a single line from Venice<sup>3</sup>— It is now 6 months since we have heard even in an indirect manner from there— God knows what has happened or what has not— I suppose S[helley] must go to see what has become of the little thing [Allegra]—yet how or when I know not, for he has never recovered from his fatigue at Rome and continually frightens me by the approaches of a dysentery—besides we must remove— My lying in & winter are coming on so we are wound up in an inextricable dilemma—this is very hard upon us—& I have no consolation in any quarter for my misfortune has not altered the tone of my father's letters— So I gain care every day & can you wonder that my spirits suffer terribly—that time is a weight to me—& I see no end to this—

Well to talk of something more interesting— Shelley has finished his tragedy & it is sent to London to be presented to the managers—it is still a *deep secret* & only one person, Peacock who presents it, knows anything about it in England— With S[helley]'s public & private enemies it would certainly fall if known to be his—his sister in law<sup>4</sup> alone would hire enough people to damn it— It is written with great care & we have hopes that its story is sufficiently polished not to shock the audience— We shall see.

Continue to direct to us at Leghorn for if we should be gone they will be faithfully forwarded to us— And when you return to Rome just have the kindness to enquire if there should be any letter for us at the post office

I hope the country air will do you real good— You must take care of yourself—remember that one day you will return to England & that you may be happier there—

Affectionately Yours  
MWS.

[P.S.] Shelley desires his kindest remembrances & thanks—he will write soon—Clare &c— Have you paid Bandeloni, her music master?—if not pray do—

<sup>2</sup> For William Shelley.

<sup>3</sup> From Byron or the Hoppners about Allegra.

<sup>4</sup> Eliza Westbrook.

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ Alla Casa della/ Signora Rosalinda Rotonda./ Roma/ per Gensano. POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2) [? 25] SETTEMBRE. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.340-41); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 408-10; Dowden, II, 280, 282, 329 (quots., 10 lines); Marshall, I, 256-57 (latter half only); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 79-80. TEXT: From original letter.

## 75. To Leigh Hunt

Leghorn—Sept. 24th 1819

My dear Hunt

How very thankful we are to you for your Monday letters<sup>1</sup>—this is truly kind of you—and yet we have both been very ungrateful, and not answered them as we ought— For me I hardly need make any excuse—for I am so seldom in a humour when any letter of mine could be in any degree amusing or acceptable—& Shelley has for these last days been so occupied with our friends here from various causes—that with that, and his poem<sup>2</sup> which you will have received—and his spanish—for Clare's brother<sup>3</sup> has been here—he has passed 15 months in Spain—and Shelley having made some progress in spanish before he came he wished to take advantage of his short stay here to improve himself more—with all these things his time has been fully taken up — Yesterday he went to Florence to take lodgings for us— I shall be confined there some time next month—& we shall probably spend the whole of the winter there—somewhat dully to be sure since we shall not know a soul there—and there is little to amuse us in looking at one another and reading there what we already too well know— Yet I am the worst at this, for latterly Shelley's spirits have been tolerably good—& his health much improved although the variableness of this climate is not very good for him— The transitions from heat to cold are worse here than in England—for instance 3 days ago we had the finest weather in the world—so hot that you could not stir out in the middle of the day—& now it has become as cold as sometimes I have felt it at Christmas in England— This will not last for when the wind changes it will become warm again—in the mean time we freeze in an Italian built house that lets in the wind on every side—no fire places & stone floors— The Italians although having so much hotter weather than we & feeling the heat more than we—yet are not nearly so sensible to the cold as us—and take very few precautions against the cold season except holding a little earthenware pot with charcoal in it in their hands—

In my last letter I answered your kind words about pictures<sup>4</sup>—Italian artists

<sup>1</sup> In August, 1819, Hunt wrote: "I wish you would encourage my epistolary interviews by writing to me every Monday morning; I would write on the same day myself—say at nine o'clock . . . I will begin the system, at any rate." —*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 135. The Shelleys did not take up the suggestion, and Hunt's resolution soon broke down.

<sup>2</sup> *The Mask of Anarchy*, written early in September shortly after reading about the Manchester Massacre, and sent to Hunt for insertion in *The Examiner*. Hunt did not print it until 1832, when he published it in a small volume with a preface.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Clairmont, whose visit lasted from about September 4 to November 10, after which he went to Vienna.

cannot make portraits— We may chance to find an English or German at Florence & if so I will persuade Shelley to sit— As for me it would have been very well 6 months ago but now I could not persuade myself to sit to be painted — I can assure you I am much changed—the world will never be to me again as it was—there was a life & freshness in it that is lost to me—on my last birthday when I was 21—I repined that time should fly so quickly and that I should grow older so quickly—this birthday—now I am 22—although the time since the last seems to have flown with speed of lightning yet I rejoiced at that & only repined that I was not older—in fact I ought to have died on the 7th of June last<sup>5</sup>—

I am very much obliged to Marianne for the trouble she has taken about my commissions Of course the parcel has been sent long ago—in your next letter I hope to have the bill of lading or at least the name of the Captain & vessel—& then it will entirely depend on whether the vessel quits London directly— I am very anxious for some of the things—

It gives me great pleasure to hear tha[t] you have such good hopes of Thornton Pray how doe[s] Johnny get on & have you now another? How very happy you must feel amidst all their noise & bother when you think of our desolate situation— Marianne might well laugh if it were a laughing matter at the recollection of my preachments about having so large a family when I now say that I wish I had a dozen—any thing but none—or one—a fearful risk on whom all one's hopes and joy is placed—

Why do I write about this—why because I can write of nothing else & that is why I write so seldom

My best & most affectionate wishes are with you—take care of yourselves & pray write still every week— Clare sends her love—to Bessy also—is she still with her brother<sup>6</sup>—pray tell us—

Yours ever

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] I must say a word of Mr. Gisborne whom you will see<sup>7</sup>— You will find him a very dull man—but if you take any trouble about him you will be well repaid when Mrs. G[isborne] joins him for she is an excellent woman—& what you will think praise very much attached to Shelley—to me too perhaps but I am nothing now & it is impossible any one can much like so dull a person

As you talked of moving at Michaelmas I direct this letter to the E[xaminer] office—a letter was sent yesterday with a poem<sup>8</sup> in it directed to York Buildings

<sup>4</sup> On September 6, 1819, Hunt wrote: "But you tell us nothing of *pictures in return*" [for his portrait].—*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 140.

<sup>5</sup> On which day William Shelley died.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Kent.

<sup>7</sup> Mr. Gisborne left Leghorn for England on September 12, 1819.

<sup>8</sup> *The Mask of Anarchy*, mentioned earlier in the letter.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Examiner Office/ 19 Catherine St—Strand—/ London/ Angleterre. POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2, English) FPO/ OC. 9/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2743); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Letters*, 74–78. TEXT: From original letter.

## 76. To Maria Gisborne

Florence,<sup>1</sup>  
Oct. 5, 1819

My dearest Mrs. Gisborne

I should have written to you before but we were detained one day longer on our journey than we counted and did not arrive time enough on Saturday to write— Except the last miles I was not at all fatigued but the roads near Florence are so exceedingly bad that it would have been bad for me were not our carriage so easy.

Well we are now tolerably settled in our lodgings which are convenient in their way but one always feels uncomfortable at removing from a house to oneself to one occupied in common with others— We talk a great deal about you & long to know some news of the steam engine<sup>2</sup> of course we shall have a letter in the course of the week

I only write you this line to say we have arrived safe & well for as to letter writing that must be transferred to Shelley for [I] find my hand trembles even with these few words— You will not judge of my affection by a short letter—and you will repay me I am sure by a long one—reflecting how solitary & dull we must be here—& you can write a long letter if you please as Mrs. G[isborne] will prove when she sits beside a fine coal fire her spectacles on, &—but you can fill up the rest of the picture—

I have a favour to ask of you which I know you will not delay in doing—this is that you will make up a parcel of our Tales of my Landlord—Frankenstein—Birbecks journal & letters—Cobbetts Year's residence<sup>3</sup>—the reviews that we have—[Revolt of Islam *stricken out*] the two last Cantos of Childe Harold—& ½ lb. of the very best green tea that you can possibly get—at whatever price—& send these by the very first quick & sure conveyance to Pisa—directed to Madame Mason<sup>4</sup>—Casa Silva—Via Mala gonella—Pisa—

<sup>1</sup> Leaving Leghorn on September 30, the Shelleys arrived in Florence on October 2; they occupied an apartment in the Palazzo Marini, 4395 Via Valfonda.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley had become keenly interested in Henry Reveley's project to build a steamboat to ply between Leghorn, Genoa, and Marseilles, and had obligated himself to pay the cost of the steam engine, which was to be built by Reveley. After a considerable expense to Shelley and much work by Reveley, the project was finally abandoned after the Gisbornes returned to England in May, 1820. Shelley was greatly disappointed and, in consequence, was temporarily cool towards the Gisbornes.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Walter Scott, *Tales of My Landlord*, Third Series, 4 vols. (1818); probably Morris Birbeck, *Letters from Illinois* (1818) [the British Museum catalogue has no *Journal and Letters*]; William Cobbett, *A Year's Residence in the United States of America* (1818—2nd. ed., 1819). In the original letter the items in Mary's list have oblique marks through them, showing that the Gisbornes checked them as each was ready. Above "last two Cantos of Childe Harold" Mrs. Gisborne wrote "the 4th. only."

I send you the list of books that you have of ours—

Clare & Shelley send their best love to you & I would say to Henry but that would not do from the young lady so take out her name & only *remember her kindly* to him<sup>5</sup> as well as my self— Shelley longs for a letter from him Adieu

Most affectionately Yours

M W S.

[P.S.] I am very anxious about our Neapolitan box

Townley tea was tried & found wanting perhaps there is better at Dunns

You will of course open the box from Naples—be so kind as to inclose in it for me the very finest small tooth comb you can get and a brush for it—I can get a comb here but it is not fine enough

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Ferma in Posta/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2) 8 OTTOBRE. ENDORSED: Received 7th October 1819. Ansd. 11th Dec. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.342–43); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 416–18; Dowden, II, 304 (quot., 2 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 80–81. TEXT: From original letter.

## 77. Shelley to Leigh Hunt

Florence,

November 2, 1819

[P.S. by Mary] At the end of August Hunt wrote to say that my parcel was to be sent the next day—Sept. 12th he said his letter had been put off that he might give us news of it yet not a word of news did he give—nor has since— Ah Marianna mia—I hope you and your babe are well— Kiss him for me— Clare begs her love to you all—

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Examiner Office/ 19 Catherine St. Strand/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2, English) FPO/ NO. 16/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.303–304); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. (Mary's P.S. on f.304.) PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, II, 427; Julian edition, X, 104. TEXT: From original letter.

## 78. To Marianne Hunt

Florence—Nov. 24th 1819

My dear Marianne

At length I am afraid Hunt has got tired of his Monday remembrances—I cannot tell you how this vexes me; perhaps he thinks that my little Percy<sup>1</sup> will serve instead—but why not have two pleasant things instead of one? Ask

<sup>4</sup>Mrs. Mason was once the pupil of Mary Wollstonecraft in Ireland. After her separation from the Earl Mountcashell she became the common-law wife of George William Tighe and lived in Italy with him under the name of Mrs. Mason. She and the Shelleys were intimate friends after the Shelleys removed to Pisa in January, 1820. Claire and Mrs. Mason were very much attached to each other, but between Mary and Mrs. Mason there was very little affection. Mrs. Mason's daughters, Nerina and Laura (or Lauretta), appear frequently in Mary's later correspondence. See Dowden, II, 315–18.

<sup>5</sup>Henry Reveley wished to marry Claire, but she refused him.

<sup>1</sup>Percy Florence Shelley, born on November 12 at Florence.

him to be very good, and to continue his practise, which was the pleasantest in the world—tell him we have few friends in any part of Italy—none in Florence—& none whom we love as well as we love him: make him always consider it a *black Monday* when he does not write a little to us.

A few days before we left Leghorn which is now 2 months ago Shelley sent a poem called the mask of anarchy Hunt does not mention the reception of it—it was directed to York buildings—and he is anxious to know whether it has been received— You will have received several other large packets from him— You will ask Ollier for money to pay for these extra extraordinary letters—but just let us hear of their safe arrival— We have to thank Bessy for her kindness in transcribing Hunt's kindness<sup>2</sup>—but it so happened that the practical Peacock had thought it worth while to send those three Examiners themselves to us by post—pray how is the said gentleman going on—he is not yet married & says he does not think about it—I am afraid *his* Marianne<sup>3</sup> does & somewhat bitterly—she had rather perhaps that he were still faithfully rustivating at Marlow; for this shepherd-King has I am afraid forgotten his crook & his mistress— Do not shew him this gossip of mine concerning him on any account—

After writing this long page I need not tell you that I am very well—and the little boy also—he was born a small child but has grown so during this first fortnight that if his little face were not always the same one might almost think him a changed child he takes after me— You see I say more about him than Hunt did of his little Harry but he is my only one and although he is so healthy and promising that for the life of me I cannot fear yet it is a bitter thought that all should be risked on one Yet how much sweeter than to be childless as I was for 5 hateful months— Do not let us talk of those five months: when I look back on all I suffered at Leghorn I shudder with horror yet even now a sickening feeling steps in the way of every enjoyment when I think—of what I will not write about

I hope all your children are well—they must all be grown quite out of our knowledge— Years can hardly give steadiness to Thornton—& Johnny & Mary are yet in the jumping age give them a kiss they & the three younger ones—including the little stranger [Henry Sylvan]—

You have no notion how many admirers Hunt has got here by means of his picture especially among our lady acquaintances (English) I had corked up in my memory a number of soft & tender exclamations concerning his eyes & his hair & his forehead &c— I have forgotten them unfortunately—but really from the effect his physiognomy produces on all who see him & the warmth with which people defend him after seeing it who were cool before—and their vows that indeed he cannot be the Bristol Hunt I should think that his

<sup>2</sup> In the *Examiner* for September 26 and October 3 and 10, 1819, Hunt had attacked the *Quarterly Review* for its review (April, 1819) of *The Revolt of Islam*.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 66, note 1.

friends ought to club to have his picture painted by Owen or Lawrence<sup>4</sup> & exhibited & then no one would think ill of him more—

Shelley in his last letter mentioned something about his return to England<sup>5</sup>—but this is very vague— I hope—how ardently you may guess that it will not be—but in any case keep it quite a secret as if he came hardly a creature must know it— We have been pursued by so much ill luck that I cannot hope & dare not that things will turn out well—but his return would be in so many ways so dreadful a thing that I cannot dwell long enough upon the idea as to conceive it possible—We do not think of all returning— Since we have returned to Tuscany we have lived for the first time in an æconomical manner & it would be madness to break this up besides that arrests & a thousand other things render it impossible that we should be known to be in England—

(November 25th) Another post day & no letter from any of you who I must tell you are the only people from whom we receive any letters except concerning business— Peacock's correspondence having degenerated since the time he had nought to do but to tune his pipe in Bisham wood— I could ask a thousand questions about you and yours, but I am afraid that they would not be answered & so instead I will talk to you of ourselves. You may judge by what Shelley has sent to England<sup>6</sup> that he has been very busily employed—and besides this he often spends many hours of the day at the gallery admiring & studying the statues & pictures— There are many divine ones—he says—for my part I have not seen any thing except one peep I took at the Venus di Medici which is not a striking statue—both from its size & the meaningless expression of the countenance—the form requires study to understand its full merit.

Claire<sup>7</sup> has got now a very good singing master & is getting on exceedingly well— Tell Hunt that there is a beautiful song—*Non temete, O Madre Amata*—of Azzioli's—only a few copies of which were printed—I wish he could get it to sing to me when I return. When will that be? I must answer with the nursery rhyme—When I grow rich.

After having heard that the box you so kindly sent was shipped from Genoa we have heard no more of it—fortunately a box from Peacock contained the things I so indispensably needed—but I am now in great want of the flannel for the child—

<sup>4</sup> William Owen (1769–1825), portrait painter; Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), painter.

<sup>5</sup> During most of his life in Italy Shelley expected the death of his father to necessitate his return to England to settle his affairs. As early as [? September 22, 1818], Shelley had written from Padua to Mary at Este, "As yet I do not direct to you *Lady Shelley*."

<sup>6</sup> Since August, 1819, Shelley had sent to England, besides miscellaneous short poems, the following: *Julian and Maddalo*, *The Cenci*, *The Mask of Anarchy*, and *Peter Bell the Third*. *Prometheus Unbound* was not sent until the middle of December. Of all these, only *The Cenci* and *Prometheus Unbound* were published in Shelley's lifetime.

<sup>7</sup> Up to this time, since Jane Clairmont had adopted the name Clara or Clare, Mary had always spelled the name "Clare." Beginning with this letter, she always (with occasional lapses until the habit was established) spelled it "Claire."



I long to hear from you—I wish you could squeeze a hour for a letter—  
Love from all to all— Have you received Peter Bell 3rd<sup>8</sup> &c—

Yours affectionately & entirely

Mary W Shelley

ADDRESS: (In Shelley's hand) Mrs. Hunt—/ Examiner Office/ 19, Catharine Street/ Strand/ London. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2, English) FPO/ DE.15/ 1819. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2744); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 78–83. TEXT: From original letter.

## 79. To Maria Gisborne

[Florence, November 29, 1819]

My dear Mrs. G[isborne]

I have promised a lady here to write to you on a subject on which I think your *trinity* can be of service to her by giving her some necessary information— This lady has a son of 14 years of age who in a year will take up his commission—in the East Indian service—he is she says quite wild from India—but she wishes to make use of this year in giving him some mathematical instruction either here or at Pisa— The difficulty in this is that he does not understand the least Italian & she does not wish him to lose his time while he acquires this language—nor does he understand french—so that her object is to get an introduction to some person sufficiently qualified who could teach him in English— This lady w[oul]d prefer Florence to Pisa as she is settled here—but I am afraid your counsels would be confined to Pisa—do you think Foggi would be of any use on such an occasion— He wishes to begin from the beginning Henry perhaps might suggest something with regard to Florence.

I have still no news of my box which is very provoking since it gave out so much better hopes at the beginning.

What on earth can have come to the Sig[no]ra Tonelli<sup>1</sup>—S[helley] called there—the servant said la famiglia sta in Inghilterra— You must help us out of this dilemma as we do not know what to do—if the Sig[no]ra T[onelli] would send any one to our house to receive the money before noon on any day some one of us would be at home—to pay it—

I hope all is going on well with you & that this dreadful weather either does not exist at Livorno or that your health does not suffer by it—

When are we to see you?

Affectionately Yours

M W S.

<sup>8</sup> Written at Florence (finished by October 28) and sent on November 2 to Hunt, who was to give it to Ollier for publication. It remained unpublished until Mary included it in the collected poems in 1839.

<sup>1</sup> In a letter from [Florence, September 25, 1819], Shelley wrote to Claire at Leghorn: "Give my compts. to Siga. Tolonci [*sic*], and pay her at the interval you think fit eleven crowns, and say that I have given a receipt for it. Say that I am going to see her house, etc., etc."—Julian edition, X, 85. This lady evidently lived in Florence, but had been visiting in Leghorn for some time. For what the Shelleys owed her money, I do not know. See Letters 80 and 81.

[P.S. *written in pencil*] This letter was to have been sent last post— I have now received your letter— I hope to get the box today—

Shelley *Calderonized* on the late weather—he called it an epic of rain with an episode of frost & a few similes concerning fine weather<sup>2</sup>—

We have heard from England although not from the bankers but Peacocks letter renders the affair darker than ever<sup>3</sup>— Ah my dear friend you in your slow & sure way of proceeding ought hardly to have united yourself to our eccentric star— I am afraid that you will repent & it grieves us both more than you can imagine that all sh[oul]d have gone so ill—but I think we may rest assured that this is delay & not loss— It can be nothing else.

I write in haste—a carriage at the door to take me out & Percy asleep on my knee. Adieu.

Charles is at Vienna by this time<sup>4</sup> he did not go by the steam boat to Trieste—be so kind as to let us know how we ought to direct to C[harles] C[lairmont] ferma in Posta Vienna.

[*In Shelley's hand*] Next Post or the Post after my bankers are to write & explain—of course I shall soon send the good news—

[*In Mary's hand*] Our box is not yet come.

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2) 1 DECEMBRE. ENDORSED: Recd. 1<sup>st</sup> Dec. Ansd. Do. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.344-46); A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo and 1 p. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 125 (quot., 3 lines; wrong date); *Shelley and Mary*, II, 464-66; Dowden, II, 311 (quot., 2 lines); Marshall, I, 263-64 (quot., 13 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 81-82. TEXT: From original letter.

## 80. To Maria Gisborne

[Florence] Thursday [December 2, 1819]

My dear Mrs. G[isborne]

I am become uneasy about this felucca which seems to be above a month coming from Genoa— I am afraid that it is cast away & all the little boy's<sup>1</sup> flannel petticoats are gone to the bottom—

Now my confinement is well over & I am getting well & strong I hope you are beginning to consider your promised visit which was to take place about this time— It would give me so much pleasure & would be so very agreeable to see you here—do you think seriously about coming soon.

The little boy is nearly 3 times as big as when he was born—he thrives

<sup>2</sup>This paragraph is quoted in *Shelley Memorials*, 125, under the incorrect date of October 5.

<sup>3</sup>Shelley had promised Henry Reveley £200 for his steamboat, but was unable for a long time to pay it because of some entanglement in his account with his bankers. From October 28 until December 23 his affairs remained complicated. On December 7 he managed to send Reveley £100, and on December 23 the remaining £100. The delay in the construction of the steamboat occasioned Shelley much vexation. For the letters about this matter, to Reveley, the Gisbornes, and Brookes and Co., see the Julian edition, X, 100, 101, 131, 132, 135-36.

<sup>4</sup>On November 17, 1819, Shelley wrote to Henry Reveley that "Charles [Clairmont] left us a week ago."—Julian edition, X, 127.

<sup>1</sup>Percy Florence's baby clothes, sent from England by Mrs. Hunt.

well & cries little & is now taking a right down earnest sleep with all his heart in his shut eyes

There [are] some ladies<sup>2</sup> come to this house who know Shelley's family—the younger one was entousiasmée to see him—the elder said that he was a very shocking man—but finding that we became the mode she melted and paid us a visit she is a little old Welshwoman without the slightest éducation—she has got an Italian master & has entered into the difficult part of the language—the singulars & plurals—the *il's* & the *lo's* & is to turn masculines into feminines & feminines into masculines—but she says she does not think she shall ever learn for she cannot help mixing Welsh with her italian & besides it spoils her french she speaks the sweetest french as you may judge by her telling her master *Je ne peux lire aucune plus*—

The younger lady was a ward of one of Shelley's uncles—she is lively & unaffected—she sings well for an english dilettanti & if she would learn the scales would sing exceedingly well for she has a sweet voice. So there is a great deal of good company for Clare who is as busy as a bee among them all serving as an interpreter to their masters— She has a most excellent singing master & he now teaches several other young ladies who are here—one who had had a very cross master in England when told to sing *Sol* burst into tears—the poor man was aghast—non capisco questo effetto

I do not know why I write all this gossip to you—pray let us hear of you & the steam boat & the felucca—

Affectionately Ys.

M W S.

[P.S.] The rains confined Shelley to the house so much that he could not go to la Sig[no]ra Tonelli—today he has been—they say that she is still in England<sup>3</sup>

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.347-48); A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 128 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, II, 453-55; Dowden, II, 284-85, 310 (quots., 3 & 13 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 82-83. TEXT: From original letter.

## 81. To Maria Gisborne

[Florence, December (c.13), 1819]

You see—my dear Friend—by the receipt of your crowns that we have

<sup>2</sup> The ladies were Miss Sophia Stacey, youngest daughter of Mr. Flint Stacey, of Sittingbourne, and Miss Corbet Parry-Jones, sister of Sir Love Parry-Jones, of Madryn Castle, Pwllheli. (Dowden's conjecture that the second lady was Mrs. Meadows is wrong; and Mary's account of her here is exaggerated, for she was, according to Mrs. Angeli, "a very cultivated lady.") Miss Stacey, after the death of her father, became the ward of Mr. Parker, the husband of one of Sir Timothy Shelley's sisters. Shelley became very fond of Miss Stacey, who admired him greatly. He gave her half a dozen of his short lyrics, helped her daily with her Italian, and got up early to see the ladies off on December 29. He also wrote a letter of introduction for her to Signora Dionigi of Rome. It was Miss Stacey who suggested "Florence" as the second name for Percy Florence. These facts are drawn from Helen Rossetti Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy* (London, Methuen & Co., 1911), 95-105, where Miss Stacey's diary is quoted freely.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 79, note 1.

recovered £100 of our money—there is still £100 in jeopardy—but we must hope & pray, & perhaps by dint of giving it up as lost we may find it again—I have intended for some time to write to you, but you cannot tell how my time is taken up in provoking trifles, which leave no trace behind—except indeed I may call the encreasing size of the little boy a trace—for the cause of that encrease is the great cause of my idleness—first breakfast late on his account—then after as soon as I have dressed him & put him to sleep I must seize the little leisure for a walk which is now so perfectly necessary to me—on my return—dinner—for young & old—dressing—then it is evening—& for these last evenings—a lady here & a very amiable one having been far too ill to go to the fire in the common sitting room of Mad[a]me Du P[antis] she she been with us—thus cutting up the few short remaining hours—but yesterday having taken a walk long enough to make my feet blister I have been obliged to cut it short today & this occasions this long letter of excuses. After all for several reasons I am very sorry that we have come to pass the winter at Florence especially this early season—attendance for me I could have got quite as good & far *cheaper* at Pisa— We should have been within a more possible distance of you—& I am too much confined to the house to see Florence well—and as we do not know an Italian soul here I can do nothing towards any plan of study that I may have meditated<sup>1</sup>—besides the weather at Pisa I hear is far milder—but there is now no remedy—for it w[oul]d not accord with our æconomical plan to move again so soon—besides Clare has got so good a singing master & is getting on so prosperously in her sol fa's that I sh[oul]d be sorry to break in upon her *studies* untill she had made a progress that would not fear a falling off when she left him. Shelley talks of coming to you—but the weather I am afraid will not permit it—his general health is much improved but he has a pain settled in his side which is taking so rhumatic an appearance that we fear cold & damp more than ever— We think of a course of warm baths for him in May—pray how far is Casciano from Pisa?<sup>2</sup> And now let me talk about you & ask you about your spirits—mine were very bad some days ago—they are better now—but always *irregular* We do not live here in the extreme solitude that you do—for we mix a little with the people down stairs because some of them are tolerably agreeable people & others assert a claim to our acquaintance on the score of being acquainted with S[helley]'s family, but you never see any one except those whom you shut out when you can— This is a melancholy thing—one does not wish you to go into the society that surrounds you but one grieves that you do not know any worth your friendship— I wish the steam boat were stocked & manned & bound for England—if you were not overcome by money cares there & think you would be happier among your country people.

<sup>1</sup> In her lengthy reply to this letter (*Shelley and Mary*, II, 438–44), Mrs. Gisborne wrote: “We do not know a single Italian who could be of the least use to you in Florence.”

<sup>2</sup> About twenty miles, Mrs. Gisborne replied.

Can you not indeed take your money from the stocks without the consent of Henry's Uncle?—& his obstinacy—for obstinate no doubt he will be, may be cruel to you— Yet God knows what you would do with your money—although I am afraid that English funds are become more uncertain than foreign ones—

We have received our box—it contained no books—it was a silly expensive affair—but that was not my fault—I did the best I c[oul]d & that you know is a consolation— Mad[a]me T[onelli] is paid— I have no other news for you—except that poor little Zoide writes to say that she is unhappy so she is to come home— Of course the W[ebb]s will storm but from what I have heard of Zoide's character I am sure that if she complains her mother is justified in taking her away.

If you hear of any one coming to Florence would you send 4 brach. to match the enclosed?

Affectionately Yours  
M W S

[P.S.] Would you buy for me also a gown of a close pink stripe—not like the enclosed but of good material—if it is no wider than that buy 9 brach. if wider 8. send it by the first good conveyance— I have no room for apologies for troubling you but I am not the less obliged and in return I send you som[e]thing to amuse you—the bane & antidote—the bane from the quarterly the antidote from Blackwoods Edinburgh Magazine, a publication as furious as the quarterly but which takes up the arms singularly enough in Shelley's defence— We half think that unless it is Mitching Mallecho (See Hamlet Act III—Sc.ii) that it must be by Walter Scot who is the only liberal man of that faction.<sup>3</sup>

If Henry goes to Pisa ask him to remember my request concerning the list of books from his astronomer—is the Genoese steam boat bad or good for you? We are anxious to hear concerning it— I have begun reading with Shelley the Conquista de Mexico by Solis— We have read very little as yet— have the kindness to send us the meaning of tamaño & alcabalas.<sup>4</sup>

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2) [? 15] DECEMBRE. ENDORSED: Recd. 15th. Dec. 1819. ANSD. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.349–50); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 129 (quot., 11 lines); *Shelley and Mary*, II, 461–63; Dowden, II, 310 (quot., 4 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 83–85. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> The bane was a furious review of *The Revolt of Islam* in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1819, by John Taylor Coleridge. The antedote was a review of the *Alastor* volume in *Blackwood's Magazine* for November, 1819, by John Wilson (Christopher North), in which review the *Quarterly* was taken to task for its abuse of Shelley and *The Revolt of Islam*. *Blackwood's Magazine* consistently championed Shelley as a poet of great genius though perverted opinions, until the publication of *Adonais* in 1821, when it gave up Shelley as hopeless. The *Quarterly* was invariably hostile. See Newman I. White, *The Unextinguished Hearth* (Durham, Duke University Press, 1938), 110–16, 133–42, for the two reviews.

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Gisborne replied: "‘Tamanto,’ so great. ‘Alcabala,’ a tax or duty on goods."

## 82. To Maria Gisborne\*

Florence, Dec. 28, 1819.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

I am glad that you are pleased with the *Prometheus*—the last act<sup>1</sup> though very beautiful is certainly the most mystic of the four— I am glad also that Spencer pleases you for he is a favourite author of mine—in his days I fancy translations & plagiarisms were not considered so disgraceful as they are now<sup>2</sup> — You have not all of him & perhaps you have not read therefore the parts that I particularly admire—the snowy Florimel—Belphebe and her squire lover who is half meant for Q. Elizabeth & Lord Essex—Britomart is only an imitation—she is cold & dull but these others & the lovely Una are his own creations & I own I like them better than Angelica although indeed the thought of her night scene with Medoro came across me & made me pause as I wrote the opinion—but perhaps it is not in pathos but in the simple description of beauty that Spencer excels— His description of the island of bliss is an exact translation of Tasso's Garden of Armida yet how is it that I find a greater simplicity & spirit in the translation than in the original—yet so it is.

You cannot guess how busy & I may almost say now it is over uselessly busy I have been these last days— Milly<sup>3</sup> has left us & for 3 days we were without a servant for the child (*chi è bello e grasso*) now we have a German-Swiss who speaks Italian perfectly who as much as I see of her I prefer to Milly infinitely so we are fortunate so far & now I think of beginning to read again Study I cannot for I have no books & I may not call simple reading study for Papa is continually saying & writing that to read one book without others beside you to which you may refer is mere child's work—but still I hope now to get on with Latin & Spanish— Do you know that if you could borrow for us Rousseau's *Emile* & Voltaire's *essai sur l'esprit des nations* either or both you would oblige us very much & send them with the stripped cotons which I wish you to send if the duty is not intolerable but I dare say your *sage* (I mean Giuseppe<sup>4</sup>) can manage that.

Shelley has given up the idea of visiting Leghorn before the finishing of the steam boat—he is rather better these last 2 or 3 days but he has suffered dreadfully lately from his side—he seems a changed man his numerous weaknesses & ailments have left him & settled all in his side alone for he never any other winter suffered such constant pain there— It puts me in mind of the mountain of ills in the *Spectator*—where mankind exchange ills one with the other—there they all take up their old evils again as the most bearable I do not know whether this is Shelley's case.

Well—I hope the steam engine is getting on prosperously— Give our best

<sup>1</sup> Written at Florence, being finished by December 23.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gisborne had written: "We have been transported in reading Spenser. . . . He is a great plagiarist."—*Shelley and Mary*, II, 442.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 31, note 5.

<sup>4</sup> The Gisbornes' Italian servant.

loves to it and our compts (as more respectful to the higher being) to its maker— I have a headach & will not scribble any more except to say that Papa's riddle is not yet divined Your way of cutting the knot we all think the best but it were easier to set Pelion upon Ossa than to make him think so

Adieu my dear *good* friend (& wise too & *upright*) I cannot answer what you say about Zoide<sup>5</sup> that must remain for gossip— Mad[a]me M[erveilleux du Plantis] might go on exceedingly well & gain if she had the brains of a goose but her head is a sieve & her temper worse than wildfire it is gunpowder & blows up every thing— We see a great deal of Louise she is a good girl clever too but lazy— What say you to her jilting poor Charles & marrying the steam boat (or its maker) tell it or him (if you are not afraid) that she has lovely hair pretty eyes—nice neck & shoulders for the rest non c'è male—

You see I chatter on & nonsense too that is the worst of it— Adieu

Affectionately yours

M W S.

[P.S.] Our best remembrances to Mr. G[isborne] & Mr. R[eveley]. If by any chance you have not sent the Prometheus add the word *bowers* after *from their obscurest* & in the other change it to *it's mother fears awhile*

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2) 31 DECEMBRE. ENDORSED: Recd. 31st Dec., 1819. ANSD. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley, c.1, ff.351-53); A.L.S., 5 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 129-30; *Shelley and Mary*, II, 458-60; Dowden, II, 318n (quot., 3 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VI, No. 64 (1929), 85-86. TEXT: From original letter.

### 83. To Maria Gisborne\*

Florence,

Teusday morning [January 18, 1820]

I cannot tell you my dear Friend how much we are grieved & terrified at Henry's misfortune— One misfortune seems to succeed another for you & to let you have no rest. What advice do you have for him? Indeed you ought to have Vaccà<sup>1</sup>— I hope indeed that you will write directly to let us know

<sup>5</sup> Mrs. Gisborne had written: "I am surprised to hear that Zoide is likely to return to Florence, as I lately heard that M'Merveilleux was not satisfied with her present plan, and was making application, through the medium of a friend, to be received again into Mr. Webb's family, as governess to Louisa."—*Shelley and Mary*, II, 443. Madame Merveilleux du Plantis kept the lodging-house in Florence (Palazzo Marini, 4395 Via Valfonda) in which the Shelleys had an apartment. Zoide and Louise were her daughters. Charles Clairmont fell in love with Louise, but the affair came to naught. (Newman I. White, *Shelley* [New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1940, 2 vols.], II, 154.)

<sup>1</sup> Andrea Vaccà Berlinghieri (b. 1766) of Pisa came from a distinguished family and was one of the most notable physicians and surgeons of his time. He studied in Paris and attended lectures in London, and took part in the storming of the Bastille in Paris. Returning to Pisa in 1800, he was appointed professor of surgery at the University of Pisa, where his father and his brother also held appointments. He invented many useful instruments and wrote several notable works on surgery in Italian and Latin. In addition, he was a thoroughly cultured man, having interests in many subjects, including literature and art. The Shelleys went in January, 1820, to live in Pisa in order that Shelley might get his advice. Vaccà and they became close friends. See Mrs. Angeli's excellent account of the Vaccà family in her *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 110-12, from which these facts are drawn.

how he is for I shall be very anxious, & so shall we all—untill we know that he begins to recover more rapidly—

And what a miserable winter you are passing—indeed—indeed it makes me truly unhappy to think of your sufferings— I should think that list to the doors & windows and a fire would have been better & upon my word you must still do som[e]thing—think that the steam engine will soon relieve you & do spare a few pauls to buy a large folding skreen I have seen them here which spread at your backs as you sit by the fire would keep out the drafts

Your letter has made me so uncomfortable that I cannot talk of other things except to tell you that Percy is well & that Shelley although better still feels the effects of the cold in an extreme nervous irritability

Pray let me hear *particularly* how Henry gets on and what effects are likely to ensue from this contusion— And let me earnestly entreat you not to continue your system—you may do yourself serious injury— I am sure that it is necessary for Henry to be kept warm & comfortable— It almost seems like a treason to my affection for you to have been living so miserably while we at least have been indulging ourselves in plenty of firing— You must not do this— Indeed you must not—but I feel alas that my words are fruitless though I would give the world that they were not

Pray write by return of post

Affectionately & Anxiously Yours,  
M W S.

[P.S.] Now I do insist that you make Giuseppe look for a skreen.

Henry ought [not] to have been so complaisant to Foggi— You lose yourselves by good nature to others & cruelty to yourselves— I sent yesterday for the parcel & it has not come— I shall send today.

[*In Shelley's hand*] My first impulse after the first shock of your melancholy letter was to come to you— Could I not be of use think of this & if in any manner I should be capable of being turned to the minutest profit I intreat you to send for me— Send us the minutest intelligence of poor Henry—present to him my most affectionate remembrances, & accept the same for all—

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Mad<sup>me</sup> Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) FIRENZE (2) 19 GENNAIO. ENDORSED: Recd. 20 Jan. Ans. Do. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.390–91); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 468–70; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 298. TEXT: From original letter.

## 84. To Miss Amelia Curran\*

Florence,  
Jan. 19, 1820.

My dear Miss Curran

If you suffer from the cold in the same proportion that we do I hope that at least it has had the good effect of entirely curing your malaria fever I know



that you are a bad correspondant or I should be somewhat alarmed at not hearing from you again. Rome, I fancy, is tolerably full of English—perhaps you have some friends whom you like there— How does your painting go on? — And when do you think of returning to England? I am afraid that you will answer all these questions in low spirits & with bad news—and at such a distance and with no arguments except those which your own sense and feelings can suggest what can I say—but I really think that you would be happier in Dublin or London where you would be forced to exertions which would allay the dark feeling of unhappiness—for by my own case I find that employment is the only cure to low spirits.

This letter will be presented to you with a copy of the Cenci which I hope you will like— It was refused by Covent Garden—& now that Miss O'Neil is married I do not think [it] could be brought out with effect anywhere. I hope however that it will be liked in print.

Would you have the kindness to tell me what opportunities a lady & gentleman with no family or servants could have of boarding in Rome in a genteel Italian family or if there is anything of [a] respectable boarding house which the English frequent—an Italian family or english if perfectly comfortable would be preferred— Do not give yourself much trouble about these questions but just answer as you happen to know.

I own that during all this time my heart is still at Rome— It is a place I cannot think of without a sigh and yet I long to be there yet God knows when we shall—the winter past we shall not move south during the summer—the weather has been & is still dreadfully cold—& Shelley has suffered very much— I am well and so is the little boy who thrives surprisingly.

Pray let us hear from you soon as I am anxious concerning your health & mention the subject of Shelley's last letter<sup>1</sup>— I am afraid we trouble you very much but for *that object* I know you will find my excuse in your own heart—

A good new year to you. Kind remembrances from my companions & believe me, my dear Miss Curran

Yours ever grateful

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] Could a lady get good harp strings sent from Rome here? As we think of leaving Florence to consult Vaccà at Pisa be so kind as to direct to me when you have the kindness to write to Leghorn.<sup>2</sup>

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ Al Ario della Regina/ 64 Via Sistina/ *Ultimo Piano* Roma. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.392-93); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 470-71; Dowden, II, 280n (quot., 3 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 299. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Shelley's letter of November 18, 1819, in which he had tentatively decided upon a pyramid for the grave of William (Julian edition, X, 128).

<sup>2</sup> The Gisbornes, who would be informed of the Shelleys' address in Pisa, would forward the mail.

85. *To Marianne Hunt\**

Pisa. (direct to us here.)

Feb. 24th 1820

We have at last received Bessys letter my dear Marianne, when the long protracted silence of our poor dear friend made us fear that he must be engaged in some plot or other with T——d or others so to engross his time that for three months (& during cold weather too) he could not send one look to Italy. But it appears that he is only engaged in the same plot that exercises all the world—viz. *care* & I would write a great deal to say how melancholy it makes me to see all my friends oppressed by the same load—but I wish letters from Italy to be a recreation & to draw you out of your cares as much as vain words, & kind remem[bran]ces can. Although before I leave the subject of your *cares* my dear, let me advert to your health— Bessy says in her letter that Percy from a sickly infant is grown a fine stout boy—he appears to have been in the same case as Swinburne & I am afraid from the same cause— I could say a great many things to prove to you that a woman is not a field to be continually employed either in bringing forth or enlarging grain—but I say only take care of yourself. And so I pass on to something else.

We are now comfortably settled in Pisa<sup>1</sup> for 3 months more than we have already staid & then we go again to the Baths of Lucca. Shelley's health is so very delicate that little as he can bear cold—heat is almost more injurious to him & he is ordered to seek the coolest climate Tuscany affords i.e. the Baths of Lucca: besides the Baths themselves are recommended for him The most famous surgeon in all Italy lives at Pisa, Vaccà—he is a very pleasant man—a great republican & no Xtian— He tells Shelley to take care of himself & strengthen himself but to take no medicine. At Pisa we have an appartment on the Lung 'Arno—a street that runs the length of the town on each side of the Arno, and the side which receives the southern sun is the warmest & freshest climate in the world— We have two bed rooms 2 sitting rooms kitchen servants rooms nicely furnished—& very clean & *new* (a great thing in this country) for 4 guineas & a ½ a month—the rooms are light and airy—so you see we begin to profit by Italian prices—one learns this very slowly but I assure you a crown here goes as far in the conveniences & necessaries of life as £1 in England & if it were not for claims on us & expences that are as it were external or perhaps rather internal for they belong to ourselves & not to the Country we live in we sh[oul]d be very rich indeed. As it is for the first time in our lives we get on easily—our minds undisturbed by weekly bills & daily expences & with a little care we expect to get the things into better order than they are.

Only one thing teazes us—Elise has married & Milly has quitted us & we have only Italian servants who teaze us out of our lives— I am trying to get

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Florence on the morning of January 26, going down the Arno by boat to Empoli, where they took a carriage; they arrived in Pisa about six o'clock and lodged at the Albergo delle Tre Donzelle, in the Lung' Arno Regio.

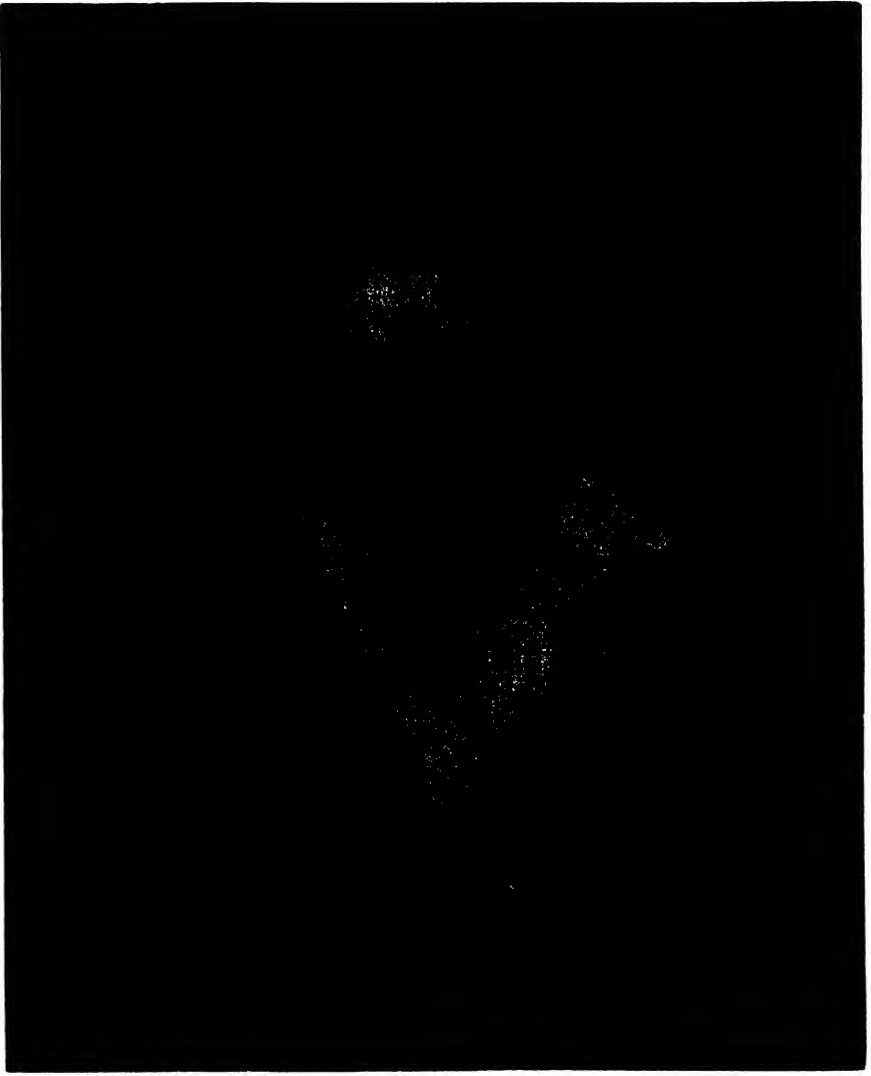
a Swiss & hope that I shall succeed. We see no society it is true except one or two English who are friends & not acquaintances—we might if we pleased but it is so much trouble to begin & I am so much confined & my time is so much taken up with my child that I sh[oul]d grudge the time—however in the summer or next winter we shall I think mix a little with the Italians. Pisa is a pretty town but its inhabitants w[oul]d exercise all Hogg's vocabulary of scamps, raffs &c &c to fully describe their ragged-haired, shirtless condition. Many of them are students of the university & they are none of the genteelst of the crew. Then there are *Bargees*, beggars without number; galley slaves in their yellow & red dress with chains—the women in dirty cotton gowns trailing in the dirt—pink silk hats starting up in the air to run away from their ugly faces in this manner: [*a sketch here illustrates*] for they always tie the bows at the points [of] their chins—& white satin shoes—& fellows with bushy hair—large whiskers, canes in their hands, & a bit of dirty party coloured riband (a symbol of nobility) sticking in their button holes that mean to look like the lords of the rabble but who only look like their drivers. The Pisans I dislike more than any of the Italians & none of them are *as yet* favourites with me Not that I much wish to be in England if I could but import a cargo of friends & books from that island here. I am too much depressed by its enslaved state, my inutility; the little chance there is for freedom; & the great chance there is for tyranny to wish to be witness of its degradation step by step & to feel all the sensations of indignation & horror which I know I sh[oul]d experience were I to hear daily the talk of the subjects or rather the slaves of King Cant whose dominion I fear is of wider extent in England than anywhere else. At present I have it double distilled through Galignani<sup>2</sup> & even thus frittered way it makes one almost sick. No—since I have seen Rome, that City is my Country, & I do not wish to own any other untill England is *free & true* that is untill the throne *Cant*<sup>3</sup> the God or if you will the abominable idol before whom at present the english are offering up a sacrificize of blood & liberty, be overthrown. Cant has more power in parliament, & over the Kingdom than fear or any other motive—a man now in England w[oul]d as soon think of refusing a duel as of not listening to & talking the language of *Cant* & from the same motive—he w[oul]d be afraid of being turned out of society.

Besides these reasons you know many others, my dear Marianne, of an individual nature that keep us from returning. If we had no debts yet they w[oul]d instantly accumulate if we went back to England—and then Shelley's health—the more we see & hear the more we are convinced that this climate is absolutely necessary to him. Not that this is a Paradise of cloudless skies & windless air—just now the *libechio*<sup>4</sup> is blowing hurricanes—but they

<sup>2</sup> *Galignani's Messenger*, a weekly newspaper in English published in Paris by Galignani. The Shelleys and many English people on the Continent read it regularly.

<sup>3</sup> The particular occasion (if any) for this lengthy and boring tirade on Cant and Castlereagh I do not know.

<sup>4</sup> Printed "Il Vecchio" in *Letters*.



PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

*from the painting by  
Amelia Curran*

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*Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery*



are equinoctial gales—but it [is] so much better than your northern island. But do not think that I am unenglishifying myself—but that nook of ci devant free land, so sweetly surrounded by the sea is no longer England but Castle-reagh land or New Land Castlereagh—heaven defend me from being a Castlereaghish woman. What say you to Hunt's gravely putting a letter in his Examiner as from a Correspondant saying that on the approaching elections, & during the present state of the country it is dangerous to repeat the name of England which has become the watchword of rebellion & irreligion— & that while the land continues in its present demoralized & disturbed state that all loyal persons should distinguish themselves by assuming for their country the denomination I before mentioned The more loyal one, which w[oul]d be Georgia is objectionable on account of the immorality of the women of the region that goes by that name, which by association might have a bad effect on the imaginations of our chaste country women of unblemished reputation!!!!— Is not this the talk of God Cant? & of his prime council the Exxxxxh Parliament? & of his prime organ the Courier newspaper?— But I really think an excellent plan might be made of it— All those who wish to become subjects of the new kingdom ought to be obliged to take an oath of citizenship not as Irish English or Scotch but as Castlereaghish— All that refused sh[oul]d be put on the alien list—besides the Government should have the right to refuse subjects—what a pic nic kingdom it w[oul]d become! One of the first things w[oul]d be to import a cargo of subjects from all various oppressed countries of the earth—not to free them but as good examples for the rest— A man w[oul]d only have to enter himself a slave—a fool—a bigot—and a tyrant where he can; to become a Castlereaghishman. The form of their oath sh[oul]d be—The King shall have my wealth<sup>5</sup>—Castlereagh my obedience—his parliament my love—the Courier my trust—the Quarter[ly] my belief—Murray my custom—down with the Whigs & Radicals—So God help me Their belief may be easily exprest—I believe in Cant—the creator of this kingdom the supporter of Castlereagh & maker of all fortunes; The sole rule of life & the life of all morality—created by fear, falsehood & hate; brought into fashion by Castlereagh, for the use of Castlereaghish men & women—detested by the Whigs yet used by them—detested by the Radicals whom it detests—[it was] born long ago, but grew much since the French Revolution, & more since the establishment of the most holy Kingdom New Land Castle-reagh—may it never die— As it has changed all truth to a lie, so does it live in & by lies & may its food never fail; nor can it while we exist. I believe in all that Cant teaches, as it is revealed to me by the Courier, & the Quarterly, & sold to me by Murray—whom Cant bless. I believe in all plots Cant feigns & creates & will use none but the language of Cant unto my last day—amen!”— I really think I will write to Castlereagh on the subject it w[oul]d be a God-send to him such a kingdom, & save him a world of trouble in grinding &

<sup>5</sup> Printed “breath” in *Letters*.

pounding, & hanging & taxing the English that remain into Castlereaghish for all that w[oul]d not accede to the terms of his agreement w[oul]d be aliens & so an end to them.— You see what a John or rather Joan Bull I am so full of politics— But I entreat you to adopt my vocabulary & call all that can support so vile a wretch as that detested Irishman by their proper name— Do not degrade the name of British they are & ever must be Castlereaghish— which pronounced in a short way Castleriaish wont be very uncouth & will be very apt.

I hope that we shall soon hear of your health & well-being, my dear Marianne. Little Percy has got the measles very lightly—it is a much milder malady in this climate than with you—& he has it mildly for this climate— Do pray you or Hunt write— Bessy's letter is dated the 6th Jan<sup>ry</sup> so God knows what may have happened since then—nothing ill I trust— But we now begin to feel that we are not travellers but exiles—since our English friends neglect & forget us— What say you to this reproach? or will you consider it as one?—

Adieu—dear Marianne.

Affectionately ys. ever

Marina W. S.

[P. S.] We have just rec<sup>d</sup> Hunts letter—it is dreadful to see how much he is teased— I hope, how sincerely that you are now going on better. Do you write— Does he think I c[oul]d write for his Indicator & what kind of thing w[oul]d he like. Shelley will answer his letter next week—Adieu

ADDRESS: Mrs. Leigh Hunt/ Examiner Office/ 19 Catherine St. Strand/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) *Pisa* (2, English) FPO/ AP. 8/ 1820. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2746); A.L. (signed "Marina W.S."), 6 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 83–93. TEXT: From original letter.

## 86. *To Miss Sophia Stacey*

[Pisa, March 7, 1820]

Before we received your letter, my dear Miss Stacey, which had fancied us still at Florence, we had flown to Pisa, living very quietly while you are honoured by the hands of princes and the eyes of princesses. I told you that you would find Naples more gay than any town in all Italy—than in all the world, I do believe. Rome will come like a sombre matron clothed in black after the sparkling, dancing Naples—Penseroso after Allegro—but during Holy Week a majestic Penseroso that strikes the eye, and more than Naples, if we omit the Prince of Batavia, interests the heart. I hope that you will be able to get into the Sistine Chapel. Mr. Shelley and I have a plan of going there next year when all the English will have hastened to the coronation and we shall have Rome *all to ourselves*. It was so extremely crowded when we were there that we could gain admittance to few of the fêtes . . .

I have just received your letter of February 28th and hasten to acknowledge the kind communication. Both Mr. Shelley and I are much concerned to hear

of your ill-health. I should have thought that the divine air of Naples would have thawed the cold you got in Via Valfonda<sup>1</sup> and have revived you. I never found my spirits so good since I entered upon *care* as at Naples, looking out on its delightful Bay. The sky, the shore, all its forms and the sensations it inspires, appear formed and modulated by the Spirit of Good alone unalloyed by any evil. Its temperature and fertility would, if men were free from evil, render it a faery habitation of delight—but as a Neapolitan said of it, '*E' un Paradiso abitato dai diavoli.*' But Rome is formed by men—a city in the midst of a desert, its associations and being are entirely human. Its hills are mole-hills even when compared with the low Apennines of Naples, but they are giants to us which once bestrode the world. Many of them are formed alone by the ruins of materials brought there by man. And the Coliseum is his masterpiece. But a truce to Rome. It is my *hobby-horse*, and as it is only a stupid wooden fellow that cannot carry me thither, he must needs stay in his stable if he will not alter his course. I hope you will go to Paestum, and in doing that you will have done more than many of our English Butterflies do—and it is ten to one if you get there without some fearful adventure. The inhabitants are so savage—clothed in rough sheep-skins with wolfish hearts, and no sweet out-sides—a bridge also that has been building these twenty years and is not finished! We walked from that broken bridge to Paestum and returned in a cart drawn by oxen. . . .

We are much flattered by your affectionate remembrances and desires to see us—a desire entirely sympathized with by us. We shall remain here stationary until the end of May, when Mr. S. is ordered to the Baths of Lucca, where we shall accordingly pass the summer— I am afraid that it does not accord with your plans, *bella Sofia*, to pass it there likewise: will not you also be one of the swallows to return to see his new most excellent and most gracious majesty crowned? Alas, but a few days ago he was but a good-for-nothing prince—bankrupt in character—but the crown that encircles the mortal temples of a king has regenerated him.

Let the friend of the Courier forgive my radicalism in favour of my being hers very affectionately,

Mary Shelley

[P.S. by Shelley] I promised you what I cannot perform; a song on singing:—there are only two subjects remaining. I have a few old stanzas on one which though simple and rude, look as if they were dictated by the heart. And so—if you tell no one *whose* they are, you are welcome to them. [*Here follow the lines* "On a Dead Violet."]

Pardon these dull verses from one who is dull—but who is not the less ever yours, P.B.S.

When you come to Pisa continue to see us—Casa Frassi, Lung' Arno.

<sup>1</sup> In Florence, where Miss Stacey and the Shelleys had rooms in the same house.



ORIGINAL: Not traced. In 1911 the MS (A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to) was owned by Mr. Corbet Stacey Catty, Sophia Stacey's son. On July 21, 1936, it was sold at Sotheby's as the property of C. W. S. Catty, grandson of Sophia Stacey, and was bought by Maggs Brothers for £210. Later in 1936 Maggs sold it to a buyer whom I have been unable to trace. PRINTED: Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 102-105; (not quite complete). TEXT: From *ibid.*

## 87. To Maria Gisborne

[Pisa, March 11, 1820]

Shelley has returned safe, my dear Friend, a little cold or so, & very glad to see the fire again, but still more glad to have seen you, being one who pleases him more than a fire so that we have a plan of keeping you with us.

Seriously I have a very serious plan to propose to you so I will mend my very bad pen and you must collect strength & thought I will tell you all about it.

You say that you reflect with horror on the idea of going to England—and as you will stay too short a time to make it any pleasure to you—and as one of you must return—need you all go? My proposal is that you give your power of attorney to Mr. G[isborne]. Send him & Henry off when you decide upon going & come & visit us. I need not tell you what a pleasure this will be to us—After our various misfortunes we want a little recreation & what can be more so than the presence of such a friend as you are, my dear Mrs. Gisborne? It will fill up so many hours with pleasant conversation that are now spent in unhappy reflection and be one of [the] greatest almost the only pleasure we have had a long, long time.

Then consider the advantage that it may be of to you. It will save you the trouble of a long & fatiguing journey—The expence to Mr. G[isborne] & Henry will be very trifling—I assure you that you with all your fears hardly foresee half the expences of living in London, but H[enry] may be with his uncle & in various ways they may be accommodated—If they are obliged to remain in England you will be here to sell the furniture & by means of the Swiss vetturinos may join them safely & well—again if they return still there will be the expence of one returning saved—Your health is delicate—but perhaps they can go by Marseilles perhaps & in France for 2 if they travel hard posting will be fully as cheap as a vetturino & then the journey will be very quickly done to Paris & from Paris there are excellent diligences—as you pay a horse a person one more person makes a considerable difference in the expence. You will suffer great discomfort if you go—You may stay here quite comfortably.

What say you, my dear Sir? Will you come over to our side of the question? Henry will take [care] of you on the journey & you will take care of him when you arrive at the jour[ne]y's end & poor dear Mrs. Gisborne will be saved much care & pain.

If you accept our invitation return the answer soon that we may ascertain

whether our good star has yet risen—but if you hesitate pray take a week to decide because I assure you that the more you reflect the better it will appear to you.

The other day as Clare & Shelley were walking out they beheld a little dirty blacksmith's boy running away from a tall long legged man running with an umbrella under his arm after him crying *fermatelo fermatelo*—the boy got into a house & cried *son nella mia botega! non tocami! son nella mia botega*— Shelley approached & and asked *cosa c'è* for the tall umbrella gentleman had seized the boy by the collar— He (the tall man) cried "Cercate il governatore—subito cercate il governatore"—"Ma perche? che cosa è?" "Signor non fa niente che cosa sia—cercate il Governatore—subito cercatelo!" & this with the greatest vehemence— A crowd collected— Clare twitched S[helley] & remonstrated— Don Quixote did not like to leave the boy in thrawl but deafened by the tall strider's vociferations & overcome by Clare's importunities he departed—& the[n] Clare out of breath with terror as you may well suppose said "for mercy's sake have nothing to do with those people it's the reverend Colonel Calicot Finch"<sup>1</sup> so they escaped the attack.

Can you not get me darning needles 6, 7, 8, & 9—2 papers of the first 3 numbers, one of 9, also a little case to put them in I have seen one here but they ask 10 pauls. And before 4 day[s] are out 1 lb. of arrowroot—

We received the tea & biscuits but as we owed most of the former to Mrs. Mason pray send another lb. when you send again.

If you visited us, the bright Giuseppe should come with you—take my word for it, it is an excellent plan for us all.

Affectionately yours,

M W S.

[P.S.] The measles are all about us & Vaccà thinks that our Percy has it—but so slightly that if it get not worse it will be rather a benefit getting it over so easily than to be regretted his having caught it—he has the eruption but no fever.

ADDRESS: Alla Ornatissima Signora/ Signora Maria Gisborne/ Livorno. POST-MARKS: (1) PISA (2) 12 MARZO. ENDORSED: Recd. 12 March. Ansd. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.394–95); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 478–81; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 300–301. TEXT: From original letter.

## 88. To Maria Gisborne\*

Pisa,

Teusday [March 14, 1820]

Dearest Mrs. G[isborne]

Do you think you could get a good woman cook for us— Do pray look about—& write to me if you hear of one but see her before you write—the wages we w[oul]d give a[re] four crowns or 4 & 1/2 & she find bread & wine.—

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 67, note 1.

And in the mean time have the kindness to send me Celeste's address for Clare could not find the house.

I daily expect a parcel from you as I am in great want of the arrow root—I do not like not hearing from you since it makes me fear that you hesitate concerning my most reasonable proposition— You cannot conceive how very much you will disappoint us if you refuse & how very much you will bore yourself by going to the desolate & enslaved England.

Today we move to pleasant roomy apartments<sup>1</sup>— Do come & see us & sleep at our house & do not be obstinate— Do you not know that S. E. [or P.] is the bride and therefore there is no fear

That letter from my father that you last sent me had lain more than a month at the Leghorn Post Office—the delay has been a great evil to us—

Adieu be good & docile—& do not force me to write a long letter of reasoning— if you are not reasonable *obey* & if Mr. Gisborne does not like to lose the dolce ma società which is very natural let him think of the ornatissima Sra Maria in the dust of travelling—in the vexations of *saving* in a country where you will find a pound will not go so far as a crown here let him trust the cara donna to us We will teach her no treason— One thing I insist upon which is if you hesitate that you come here to argue the point. Adieu

Affectionately Ys.

M W S.

ADDRESS: Signora Maria Gisborne/ per ricapito al forno d'Isidoro/ vicino al Ponte di S. Marco/ Livorno. ENDORSED: Recd. 15 March. ANSD. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 396–97); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 481–82; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 301–302. TEXT: From original letter.

## 89. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Pisa,

Wednesday [March 22, 1820]

Cara Signora—

You are wrong, believe me, in saying that you *ought* to go to England—the *duty* consists in visiting us upon my word it does— But as I said before come & argue the point— We can now offer you a comfortable bed & indeed you must not be so *particular*— Percy has the measles still on him—it has made a very light but a very long course—he has not, by Vaccà's commands been outside the door this fortnight nor will he untill the weather becomes decidedly warm as yet we have had cold winds— My coming is out of the question—to be jolted with a child for 3½ hours is no joke— So pray do come to see us— As to your staying with us when Mr. G[isborne] & R[eveley] go to England the more I think of it the more excellent the plan seems argue the point with you I must.

Shelley is a good deal better these last days & we are very busy translating

<sup>1</sup> Mary's journal for Tuesday, March 14, 1820: "Move to other lodgings."

Spinoza.<sup>1</sup> I write from his dictation & we get on—by the bye I wish you w[oul]d send me the vol of the Encyclopedia, if Henry can spare it, that gives a system of short hand for I want to learn one without delay.

I wish I could be certain that you could come to see us. Suppose you & Mr. G[isborne] came seperately & in succession— Now indeed there can be no objection to this it w[oul]d *planer* all difficulties You might say [stay] 3 days each & it w[oul]d be no such mighty affair—after all you ought not to refuse all accommodation

Claire's shoes suit extremely well be so kind as to pay for them— I want a pair of black ones for the house but will not pay more than 8 pauls—will he make a slim pair of stuff kid or morocco for this they must be made on the same last as my green *stuff* ones. If he does not remember, [I] will send him one. Two papers by a sbaglio were omitted in your last packet—they shall come in the next.

Have you heard whether the Symetry has left London

Affectionately Ys.

M W S.

ADDRESS: A Madame/ Madame Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2) 24 MARZO. ENDORSED: Recd. 24th March. Ansd. 26th, Do. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.398-99); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 140 (quot., 4 lines); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 483-84 (misdated 24th); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 302-303. TEXT: From original letter.

90. To Maria Gisborne\*

Pisa,

Sunday [March 26, 1820]

Dear Mrs. G[isborne]

Since you do not write surely you come—

What does the Spanish Consul say to the distress of his Monarch Give him my compts. & tell him that it *mi rincresce molto*<sup>2</sup>— Vaccà is delighted about it— The Rev. Colonel [Finch] has been impudent to Mad[a]me Tanti & is dismissed—

The more I think of my plan the more it delights me—but I dare not think of it for you are so very unreasonable & cross.

Can you get us a good English corkscrew—

Affectionately Ys.

M W S

<sup>1</sup> Shelley's interest in Spinoza dates back at least to January 2, 1813, when he wrote Thomas Hookham to procure for him a copy of the *Tractatus Theologico-politicus*. At Marlow, by November 3, Shelley had planned to translate this book. He dictated and Mary copied. The project was taken up again at Florence in January, 1820, and for several days (January 5-9, 12, 15-16, 23) Mary entered in her journal, "Translate Spinoza." On March 17 they began again and continued almost daily until June 3. Again the translation was revived on November 11, 1821, this time with Edward Williams taking down Shelley's dictation. Byron was to write a life of Spinoza for the translation, which was to be printed in Italy. The translating stopped after November 14, but Mary's letter of September 17, 1822, to Mrs. Gisborne indicates that the translation was completed.

<sup>2</sup> So printed in *Shelley and Mary*; the original text appears to be "mir cresce molto."

[P.S.] Last night I received your letter— Your arguments do not appear to me conclusive—but you know best— I sh[oul]d think that unless Henry lets out the secret himself which he sh[oul]d be cautioned against that his Uncle will not guess that he has just entered his eleventh [*sic*] year but will imagine him to be 30 & in that case will not [at] all be alarmed as [~~at~~] Mr. Gisbornes being with him— If your presence in England is absolutely necessary for receiving the property into your own hands it is one thing but if you can get it without renouncing it it does not appear to me to be worth a journey to England— But in all this you must judge—but it vexes me that you do not talk of coming to see us—

Do you hear anything of the Symetry?— Addio Carino— The month of March is nearly gone & bad weather with it I hope—

Remember you can have a bed with us without the slightest inconvenience to us.

[*On the back, in another hand*] We have got a Cook.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 400–401); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 486–87; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 303–304. TEXT: From original letter.

## 91. To Maria Gisborne\*

Pisa,

Good Friday [March 31], 1820

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

I will send your box soon & perhaps a vol of Political Justice which I hear you have defended to the loss of *ancient friendship*. Shelley c[oul]d not be persuaded to continue his subscription to Gaglianani [*sic*] until he found the paper stopt so we shall not have it for some days— I suppose however that you have heard the news—that the Beloved Ferdinand has proclaimed the Constitution of 1812 & called the Cortes— The Inquisition is abolished— The dungeons opened & the Patriots pouring out— This is good. I sh[oul]d like to be in Madrid now.<sup>1</sup>

Do you think that you c[oul]d get me some little stockings or shoes that w[oul]d wash for Percy— If not could not the Miss Riccis<sup>2</sup> manufacture some out of old ones—they new footed some very nicely for me so perhaps they could—his foot is the length of your middle finger—if it can be done w[oul]d you set them to work—I want 4 prs. Claires shoes I suppose are to cost 8 pauls— I sh[oul]d not think he w[oul]d not charge more.

You do not write but pray come I think you c[oul]d manage it in the way I mentioned—

How does Mr. G[isborne] get on with Homer has he nearly finished the Iliad? You ought to have read it with him.

<sup>1</sup> The Spanish insurrection inspired Shelley's *Ode to Liberty*.

<sup>2</sup> Carlotta and Appollonia, apparently the daughters of the Gisbornes' servant, Giuseppe.

Adieu dear Mrs. G[isborne]. The sun shines & it is divine weather. Shelley is not very well if I c[oul]d get a *pretty boat* & come down in 2 hours I w[oul]d come but a carriage & a child are discords— But you will come surely

Very since[re]ly & for ever yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] After all, like a goose I closed my letter having forgot the most particular thing I had to say— A gentleman of our acquaintance [Mr. Tighe<sup>8</sup>] is going to Casciano in May he will want a sitting room a bed room for himself & another for his servant—a man of the name of Passetti has asked 15 seq[ui]ns per month for these accommodations—w[oul]d you have the kindness to tell me what he ought to pay and the names of some *reasonable* lodging people there to apply to—& another [any other] facility you can thing [think] of—& the nearest to the baths—in short if you w[oul]d kindly send me the information you judge necessary on the subject.

Addio Cara Mia

ADDRESS: Alla Ornatissima Signora/ La Signora Maria Gisborne/ Livorno.  
POSTMARKS: (1) Pisa (2) 2 APRILE. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.402–403); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 484–85; Dowden, II, 342 (quot., 5 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 304–305. TEXT: From original letter.

## 92. To John Gisborne\*

Pisa,

Teusday Evening [April 4, 1820]

My dear Sir

I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you take about my little commissions—it is very kind of you & I hope does not teaze you too much.— I hope Mrs. Gisborne is better. Shelley saw the noble scion of the Fudges<sup>1</sup> who said that Henry was ill—that & your letter has frightened us but as you do not mention it in your note I hope that he is better—

I return the stocking—it will do very well—but since the weather is so warm I will only have two pair— I have short coated the young Gentleman, & I feared that he w[oul]d feel cold but he is always hot & indeed it is most delightful weather—

Both we & our friend are very much obliged to you for your information concerning Casciano— It is the husband of Mrs. Mason I think I told you that he had been confined the whole winter with an attack of rheumatism—he has been ordered the baths this May— He is not in a state to take a trip there first but he thinks of sending his servant to look at the houses & then to decide—so perhaps we shall trouble you again.

<sup>8</sup> Known in Pisa as Mr. Mason.

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 67, note 1.

After some days of weakness Shelley had a very bad nervous attack yesterday he is better today but not well.

I wish you c[oul]d come to us for a few days as I mentioned one after the other— I c[oul]d not if I came sleep out on very many accounts—but thus we sh[oul]d really see som[e]thing of you— Tell Mrs. Gisborne to persuade you

Ever sincer[e]ly yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] I sent the box & a note— Be so kind as to send the 2 lb. of tea & 1 lb. of arrow root.

ENDORSED: Ansd. 9 April. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.404); A.L.S., 1½pp folio (8½ x 12½ inches). PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 488; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 305. TEXT: From original letter.

### 93. To Maria Gisborne\*

Pisa,

Thursday morning [April 13, 1820]

Dear Mrs. G[isborne]

Shelley has lost the paper and as he never read it I am as much in the dark as ever— If it be possible & *useful* I sh[oul]d very much like to have the bath<sup>1</sup>

I wish for love or money to get a chip hat before you go or I much fear I shall not get it [at] all— What of raw silk—perhaps your milliner or your *Seraph* c[oul]d tell you whether the silk I desire is used for *netting* if it is send a quantity—common netting silk is not the thing I want—if they do not know send me a pattern that I may get more if it is right.

If Henry co[ul]d lend us the whole of the Encyclopedia in his absence he w[oul]d oblige us— When you come I have something to say about a piano—so remind me

You must expect me to shed tears when you go— I consider this as a mere trip which will bring you closer to us in future

Is your day fixed— By the arrangements made S[helley] cannot set off till Thursday week<sup>2</sup>

When we were at Leghorn [in the summer of 1819] we took our passport to the Police there who kept it & gave us a Carte de Suretè which was lost long ago— Shelley will want a passport for Bologna certainly but whether afterwards for Ravenna or Venice non si sa—but I fancy for Ravenna Can you

<sup>1</sup> As the preceding letters have shown, the Gisbornes were preparing to go to England in order to settle their affairs,—more particularly to receive from Henry Reveley's uncle certain property that was to come to Mrs. Gisborne or Henry when Henry was of a certain age. Mrs. Gisborne considered her presence in England essential. They set out on May 2, knowing that they might not return to Italy. The "paper" which Shelley lost was doubtless a list of articles which the Gisbornes wished to sell before leaving Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley was expecting (on Claire's account) to visit Byron, of whose whereabouts it is quite clear from this letter he was uncertain. He did not actually visit him until August (7–17), 1821, when Byron was in Ravenna.

aid us—perhaps a passport from the English Consul which we can get signed by other authorities here

Adieu The bobbin is not English Addio.

You[r]s for aye

M W S.

ADDRESS: La Signora Maria. ENDORSED: Written a short time before the 2 May 1820, the day of our departure. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.405–406); A.L.S., 3 pp. (6½ x 8½ inches). PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 493–94; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 306. TEXT: From original letter.

#### 94. Shelley to John and Maria Gisborne

Pisa,

April 13, 1820.<sup>1</sup>

[P.S. *in Claire's hand* ?] pray order me another pr of shoes like the last for those are almost worn out.

[*In Mary's hand*] I want to hear concerning the hunting of Buffaloes. When you come have your lesson ready

We want a Schrevelius<sup>2</sup>—can you get us one reasonably? & we shall be much obliged to you— Also when you come bring 2 lb. of tea but do not send it the duty is so high

ADDRESS: Signor Giovanni Gisborne/ Per ricapito al Forno d'Isidoro/ Vicino al Ponte di S. Marco/ Livorno. ENDORSED: Recd. Sunday 14th April [error for 16th]. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.365–66); A.L.S., 1 p. 4to. PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 161 (dated April 23). (Shelley's letter has been printed several times, but not the postscript.) TEXT: From original letter.

#### 95. Shelley to Leigh Hunt

Pisa,

May 1, 1820.

[*Added by Mary*] Do you know that you might write much longer letters if [you] wrote closer—besides at the top of each page you leave a full inch. As you are so much accustomed to this way of writing that you could not easily break yourself of it, suppose when you came to the end of your paper you turned it topsy-turvy and interlined it all the way.— I wish Marianne could write, but how can she? Bessy might; her last letter was *6th of January*.

Ever yours,

M W S.

The Gisbornes will bring a little remembrance for Marianne. I wish it had been more valuable or useful but as it not [*sic*] like letting you see friends from us without anything from us.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is given the incorrect date of April 23 in the Julian edition.

<sup>2</sup> Cornelius Schrevelius, *Lexicon Manuale Græco-Latium et Latino-Græcum* (1663). Many editions appeared before 1820, the most recent being those of 1817 and 1818.



ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esqr.,/ 13 Mortimer Terrace,/ Kentish Town, London, /Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) 4 o'clock/ May 16/ 1820 EV. (2) FPO/ May 16/ 1820. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 20100); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 493; *Letters from P. B. Shelley to Leigh Hunt*, edited by Wise, II, 26; Julian edition, X, 164-65. TEXT: From Julian edition.

96. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Casa Ricci,  
All 'Origine [Leghorn]  
June 18, 1820

My dearest Mrs. Gisborne

Where am I? Guess! In a little room before a deal table looking out on a poderè— Whose voice is that? Henry, does not your heart beat? By heaven, 'tis Miss Appolonia Ricci— Nay here we are we have taken possession— What do you say?<sup>1</sup>—

The truth is, my dear friend, a variety of circumstances have occurred not of the most pleasant nature, since you left us and [we] have been obliged to reform our plans— We could not go to the baths of Lucca and finding it necessary to consult an attorney we thought of Del Rosso & came here— Are you pleased or vexed? Our old friend Paolo was partly the cause of this—by entering into an infamous conspiracy against us—there were other circumstances that I shall not explain till we meet— That same Paolo is a most superlative rascal— I hope we have done with him but I know not—since as yet we are obliged to guess as to his accomplices.

I wish your journal would come<sup>2</sup>— I long to know how you get on in England and in fact a myriad of circumstances that your journal will explain— Tell my father I have not heard from him a long long time & am dreadfully anxious—the path of our life is a very thorny one as you well know—nor is my anxiety concerning him is not [*sic*] the least of my troubles— You will imagine how teased we were when I tell you that the fright I had gave our poor Percy a violent diarrhœa; he is now well but we were much alarmed as the poor little thing suffered but he had no fever so he has lost none of his strength & is now blither than ever—he is the merriest babe in the world— Shelley of course is not well his troubles have given him a bilious attack.

The day before we came here Annunziata was brought to bed of a little girl— Giuseppe begged Shelley to acquaint you both that it is the image of Mr. Gisborne and that Carlotta and Appolonia both say that the resemblance is striking except the nose— I tell you this as he entreated with laughable gravity that we w[oul]d. I do not know what he means for the child is as like the man in the moon in fact it is like Giuseppe— Anunziata got up the

<sup>1</sup> On Thursday, June 15, the Shelleys, with Claire, left Pisa for Leghorn, where they occupied the Gisbornes' house, Casa Ricci, the Gisbornes being in England. As Mary explains, their migration to Leghorn instead of to Lucca, where they had meant to go, was caused by Paolo Foggi's spreading scandalous stories about them. In Leghorn they put the matter into the hands of Del Rosso, an attorney.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gisborne had promised to keep a diary of her travels, but had failed to do so.

second day & is quite well Yesterday there was a grand christening & a regalo— Isidoro the baker was Compare & he sent ices—cakes—Rosoliglio & with the exception of the last—(though indeed they sent up a bottle of that) we had our share & of course gave a christening present the babe was dressed out in the most ridiculous manner it is very ugly and as black as a walnut table— She has a very large nose like her fathers so I wonder why that was excepted in the account of its resemblance— The Miss Riccis lament much the absent Caro Giovane<sup>8</sup>—quanto è carino—they say—

You seem to have suffered a great deal in your journey through France—and you will suffer the same I fear when you return— I long for your next letter pray be particular & journalize as you promised—I should write you a long letter if I were to relate all that has passed since we separated—but such things do not hurt by being kept—on the contrary they improve as we may then add the denouement to a strange commencement—

We purpose keeping possession of your premises for 1 or 2 months as it may happen— That is if you will not be angry—

And now let me ask you when we may expect you I assure you, deare[s]t friend, I long to see you very much You must arrange to be with us this winter for God knows where we shall be in the summer since the climate frightens us with regard to the babe— Thank Mr. Gisborne for his kind letters— Shelley & Claire send their love to ALL of you—there you are

Il bravo giovane-Arrigo

△

La Orna<sup>m</sup> Sig<sup>ra</sup> Maria

Il erudito Sig. Giovanni

Col. Calicot [Finch] is at Pisa— As to our books—why before I finish this letter I will consult with Shelley about them—so adieu for the present— Giuseppe is very ill I must consult about him too— As to the books you had better do nothing about them we are too unsettled—so do not send them—but have the kindness to ask Peacock four [for] Schrevelius's lexicon Jones's Greek Grammar—and the Greek exercises Hogg used to do—and bring them with you— With regard to Giuseppe—he has a high fever & we are afraid to go near him so we have sent for the doctor— A present that I had intended for you is come since you left us—there is a Caleb Williams for Henry—a Fleetwood & Essay on Sepulchres<sup>4</sup> for you so do not buy any of these.— It seems Giuseppe is not *dying* as Anunziata w[oul]d make us believe—it is not yet decided whether it is a worm or an intermittent fever—

There is one thing I want you to do which is to buy a cornelion seal neither too plain or too fine—and to get Shelleys coat of arms engraved on it You can find the coat of arms in some book of baronatage that has been published since this thirty years under the name of Sir Bysshe or S[ir] Timothy—not

<sup>8</sup> Henry Reveley.

<sup>4</sup> All books by William Godwin.

Sir John—be so kind as to get this done as I wish for it very much—and get with it a gold ring for hanging seals & key &c—

Adieu dear Mrs. G[isborne] if Henry is married present my congratulations to the bride—salted by a few tears from Appolonia Let him remember *Le Morte Lancee* & tremble—

I hope Mr. Gisborne is well—we looked out for his fate in the *Sortes Virgilia*— We found that with a feather in his cap he would be walking restlessly before the doors ruminating the fate of the old Fawn— We looked for it thinking of your evil prognostication and we find an evident coincidence— He will engage either on the Radical or Government side and walk an officer on watch before the tent of the General—no doubt on the eve of an engagement since he will thinking of the last prophecy—that his mother's eyes should be wet by the grief of his funeral.— Now as he disappointed fate last time by not going to England so he may this by not enlisting under the banners of either party

For us—so darkling is our destiny—neither Virgil or Homer w[oul]d unfold the recesses of time but spoke mysteriously of woes—so you see every thing combines—

Give our loves to Papa & Hunt & family—present our kind Compts. to Peacock & his bride<sup>5</sup> & tell us how Horace Smith likes his vases<sup>6</sup>— Again adieu

Ever & for ever yours,

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Shelley has taken possession of Henry's study.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 26 Newman St. Oxford Road—/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2, English) FPO/ JY. 5/ 1820. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.407–408); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 504–507; Dowden, II, 326 (quot., 10 lines); Marshall, I, 266 (quot., 1 line); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 306–308. TEXT: From original letter.

### 97. *To Miss Amelia Curran\**

Leghorn,  
June 20th, 1820.

My dear Miss Curran

It is a very long time since I heard from you so that if I did not know your dislike to writing I should be afraid that som[e]thing had happened—and that you were very ill— My heart—during all this time is at Rome— But I cannot conjecture when I shall be really there—still a letter with a Roman postmark would be a pleasant thing how much more welcome if from you!

I am afraid that you find great difficulties in executing our unhappy commission Shelley & I are therefore induced to entreat you to have the kindness

<sup>5</sup> On March 22, 1820, Peacock married Jane Gryffyd.

<sup>6</sup> The Shelleys had sent as a present to Horace Smith "alabaster vases from the antique." Mary's journal, May 26: "Shelley writes to H. Smith. Vases sent." In his letter of the same date to the Gisbornes, Shelley gives an account of buying and sending the vases.

to order a plain stone to be erected to mark the spot with merely his name & dates (William Shelley born January 24, 1816—[died] June 7, 1819)— You would oblige us more than I can express if you w[oul]d take care that this should be done.

Our little Percy is a thriving forward child but after what has happened I own it appears to me a fading cloud—all these hopes that we so earnestly dwell upon.

How do you like the *Cenci*— It sells—you must know of which I am verry glad— If I could hear of any one going to Rome I w[oul]d send you some other books to amuse you—for we had a parcel from England the other day—but we are entirely out of the world—

It will give me great pleasure to hear from you—to know when you leave Rome—and how your pictures encrease— Be sure I do not forget your nice study & your kind hospitality. Your study how can I forget when we have so valuable a specimen of it that is dearer to me than I can well say

Shelley desires his kindest remembrances What have become of our pictures Claire is not yet reconciled to hers— How is St. George & all your friends— I would give a very great deal to look upon the divine city from the Trinità dei Monti— Is not my heart there?—

From Papa I have not heard a very long time—affairs seem gowing [*sic*] on there badly but slower than a tortoise I hope not so surely towards their apparent end—

Farewell— I entreat you to write.

Yours with affection

Mary W S.

[P.S.] I have heard your brothers life of your father much praised<sup>1</sup>—

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ 64 Via Sistina/ Trinita de Monti/ Roma. POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2) 26 GIUG[NO]. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.409–10); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 141–42; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 508–509; Dowden, II, 328 (quot., 4 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

## 98. To Maria Gisborne

[Leghorn], July 7, 1820

No letter! no letter! I do not believe that you are so wickedly faithless as not to write & therefore expect 2 sheets so very full that fuller were never seen — I send you a letter from Shelley which as it is not addressed to any of the trinity in particular he as a courteous knight begs you as the lady fair to accept laying it humbly before the happy footstool which receives the envied weight of your most ladylike foot hoping that from thence not by its own merit but by your most gracious favour it may rise to your hands & thence be distilled into the precious *fishponds of Heshbon* namely your mild, bright eyes.

<sup>1</sup> William Henry Curran, *The Life of John Philpot Curran* [1750–1817] (London, 1819, 2 vols.)

Pray do not forget the commission I gave you concerning a piano as my friend is anxious concerning it it must be like yours, long with 6 octaves. Please to strike out of your list the fine silk stockings you were to buy & put in the stead 6 pr. of worsted stockings for a babe of a year & ½ & 12 of cotton.

Our Babe is well & merry— We are still worshipping your Penates. Ieppe<sup>1</sup> & his wife *manque'd* to scratch out each other's eyes the other night— Your pigeons lay eggs à l'envie l'un de l'autre—and the Miss Riccis are co[u]rteous & kind & greatly lament the *Caro Giovane*—

You have of course received our proposal in which we trespassed so greatly on your kindness.<sup>2</sup> I am most excessively anxious for y[ou]r answer.

We have since writting the above received Mr. G[isborne]'s extremely welcome letter—not but I am both vexed & angry with your faithless & unkind breaking of your promise— I built on a rock & I find sand— I hope you are ashamed— Now this minute begin & continue your journal— The letter with our proposal was addressed 26 Newman St.— Continue to address us at Pisa Now pray—pray—write your journal.

Ollier is a ninny or worse— Tell Hunt we never hear from him— He (Ollier) is ordered to give you a Melincourt & Headlong Hall<sup>8</sup> pray bring them with you as your friend here wants to see them, & remember to bring all the Indicators from Peacock from No. 16— We are delighted with them — Adieu Carina—Cattiva— Tell Henry that Appolonia pines & gets thin— Addio or si piace piu a lei a diavolio—

Ever & for ever yours,

M W S

[P.S.] The sun shines all day long—the north breezes blow—and the weather is actually paradisiacal—I give you joy of London smoke— Your friends seem very kind—there must be a fierce battle I think between bella Italia & smoky London. Could you not present Peter [Bell the third] to some book-seller not letting out Shelley's name & get it published so

The enclosed [Shelley's *Epistle to Maria Gisborne*] must on no account be published.— I hope you will bring Prometheus with you. Poor Mrs. Godwin! I knew it w[oul]d be thus.

Dalla bellissima e superbissima villa del Grand' Capitano Gaetano Ricci— Uffiziale dell' magnifico Ferdinando di Toscana.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ To the care of Mess. Ollier/ Booksellers/ Vere Street. Bond St./ London [Redirected to] 3 Carmarthen St./ Tottenham Co<sup>t</sup>. Road.  
POSTMARKS: (1) LIVORNO (2, English) FPO/ JY. 22/ 1820 (3) 4 o'Clock/ JY. 22/ 1820 EV. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f. 411); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 513–15; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 93 (1937), 309–10. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> Giuseppe. The entertaining story of this quarrel is related by Dowden, II, 332–33.

<sup>2</sup>“Our proposal” is fully explained by Shelley's letter of June 30, 1820, to the Gisbornes (Julian edition, X, 179–82). It was proposed that the Gisbornes lend Godwin £400, for which loan Shelley would assume all responsibility. Godwin was about to be evicted from his house in Skinner Street. The Gisbornes did not make the loan.

<sup>8</sup> Short satirical novels by T. L. Peacock.

99. *To Miss Amelia Curran\**

August 17, [1820]  
San Giuliano.

My dear Miss Curran

It gives me great pain to hear of your ill health Will this hot summer conduce to a better state or not? I hope anxiously when I hear from you again to learn that you are better having recovered from your weakness—& that you have no return of your disorder

I should have answered your letter before but we have been in the confusion of moving<sup>1</sup> We are now settled in an agreeable house at the Baths of San Giuliano about four miles from Pisa—under the shadow of mountains & with delightful scenery within a walk— We go on in our old manner with no change— I have had many changes for the worse—one might be for the better but that is nearly impossible— Our child is well & thriving which is a great comfort—and the Italian sky give[s] Shelley health which is to him a rare & substantial enjoyment

I did not receive the letter you mention to have written in March and you also have missed one of our letters in which Shelley acknowledged the receipt of the drawings you mention & requested that the largest pyramid might be erected<sup>2</sup> if they would case it with white marble for £25— However the whole had better stand as I mentioned in my last for without the most rigorous inspection great cheating would take place & no female could detect them— When we visit Rome we can do that which we wish. Many thanks for your kindness which has been very great.

I w[oul]d send you the books I mentioned but we live out of the world & I know of no conveyance Mr. Purniance says that he sent the life of your father<sup>3</sup> by sea to Rome directed to you so doubtless it is in the custom house there—

How enraged all our mighty rulers are at the quiet revolutions which have taken place it is said that some one said to the Grand Duke here *Ma richiedono una costituzione qui?*—*Ebene la daro subito*—was the reply but he is not his own master & Austria w[oul]d take care that that sh[oul]d not be the case—they say Austrian troops are coming here & the Tuscan ones will be sent to Germany. We take in Galignani & w[oul]d send them to you if you liked— I do not know what the expence w[oul]d be but I sh[oul]d think slight.

If you recommence painting do not forget Beatrice [Cenci] I wish very much for a copy of that—you w[oul]d oblige us greatly by making one—

<sup>1</sup> The Shelleys left Leghorn on August 4, spent the night with the Masons in Pisa, and arrived at the Baths of Pisa (Bagni di Pisa, or Bagni di San Giuliano), four miles from Pisa, at five o'clock in the morning. Their house, Casa Prinni, Shelley had taken a few days before.

<sup>2</sup> This apparently refers to Shelley's letter of November 18, 1819, from Florence (Julian edition, X, 127–28).

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 97, note 1.

Pray let me hear of your health— God knows when we shall be in Rome— circumstances must direct—& they dance about like will o' the wisps—enticing & then deserting us— We must take care not to be left in a bog.

Adieu take care of yourself— Believe in Shelley's sincere wishes for your health & kind remembrances & in my being ever sincere[ly yours]

M W Shelley

[P.S.] Claire desires (not remembrances—if they are not pleasant) however she sends a proper message & says she w[oul]d be obliged to you if you let her have her picture<sup>4</sup> if you c[oul]d find a mode of conveying it. Who was he with the long memory who remembered seeing me—somehow people always remember my features—even those have detected my identity who have not seen me since I was a month old—so I have hopes that when I go to Heaven I shall easily be recognized by my old friends.

Do you know we lose many letters—having spies (not Government ones) about us in plenty—they made a desperate push to do us a desperate mischief lately<sup>5</sup>—but succeeded no further than to blacken us among the English—so if you receive a fresh batch (or green bag<sup>6</sup>) of scandal against us—I assure you it is all a *lie* poor souls we live innocently as you well know—if we did not ten to one God w[oul]d take pity on us & we sh[oul]d not be so unfortunate.

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ 64 Via Sistina/ Roma. POSTMARKS: (1) Pisa (2) 24 AGOSTO. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 476–77); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 143–45; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 682–84; Dowden, II, 325 (quot., 6 lines); Marshall, I, 307–309. TEXT: From original letter.

## 100. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Casa Prini,  
Bagno di San Giuliano,  
Sept. 25, 1820.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Having a thousand things to say & hear & the situation of things being now, on your account, convenient—C[lare] being for her health at Leghorn—I wish you w[oul]d come & repose, all three, from your fatigues<sup>1</sup> here— We have a

<sup>4</sup> Painted by Miss Curran in Rome in 1819.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to Paolo Foggia, who, they thought, had some confederates. Mary several other times refers to "spies" who rob them of their letters. Whether this was imagination or fact, it is hard to say.

<sup>6</sup> The green bag is often referred to, literally or metaphorically. It was a prominent and mysterious object in the trial of Queen Caroline.

<sup>1</sup> The Gisbornes returned to Leghorn on October 10. This letter, having no address or postmark, was probably conveyed to them privately at Genoa. The Shelleys were instantly offended with the Gisbornes, as Shelley's letter of October 11 shows very plainly. Their friends had passed through (or near) the Baths of Pisa, where the Shelleys were, and had not even paused to see them. The Gisbornes, having decided to live in England, had come back to Italy principally to dispose of their property and to settle their affairs. The breach between them and the Shelleys lasted for at least two months and was never quite closed until after the Gisbornes returned to England in August, 1821. The ill-feeling was aggravated by the abandonment of the steamboat, for which Shelley thought himself not sufficiently reimbursed. Shelley's letter of October 29 to Claire, and Mary's of December 3 to Mrs. Hunt show how violent were their feelings. See Letter 102, note 1.

pleasant house plenty of beds—& would be very glad to see you—as you must well know. Do not answer this I entreat you with your accustomed refusal & intercede with Mr. G[isborne] that he will not either— But come with him & Henry for a few days at least— Do you not owe this answer to my unanswered letters?—

Affectionately yours,  
Mary W S.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne. ENDORSED: Mrs. Shelley, Sept. 25. Ansd. Oct. 5. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.412); A.L.S., 1 p 4to PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 539–40; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 360. TEXT: From original letter.

### 101. *To Leigh Hunt*<sup>1</sup>

Pisa, 3 December 1820.

Do you think, my dear friend, that we are very pleased to write thousands and thousands of letters and to receive no reply? You are cruel! Why? Indeed I can hardly keep account of the days, the long weeks and the still longer months that have passed while none of them brings us your letters. Marianne and you are equally unfaithful. Who knows what ever has become of you? Perhaps a Laplandish witch has carried you, not to the soft air and the delightful countries of the South, but to some horrid frozen and hateful land

<sup>1</sup> The original letter is in Italian. The translation (corrected in a few details) is taken from *Letters*, 93–99. The Italian text is as follows:

Pisa. Il 3 decbre—1820.

Credete voi, amico mio caro, che ci è molto piacevole di scrivere mille, e poi mille lettere, e di ricevere punto risposto? Crudel, perche? Davvero non posso contare i giorni, le lunghe settimane, e le mese più lunghe ancora che son passate, e nessun ci porta le di vostre lettere. Marianna e voi son egualmente infedele. Chi sa che mai sia divenuto di voi altri. Forse una stragua Laplandese vi abia trasportati non all'aria dolce, e ai paesi deliziose del mezzogiorno; ma a qualche terra orrida, gelato e invidiosa che abbia infredato tutto il vostro amore per noi. Pero credo per certo che voi in Inghilterra son più duri ed aspri che noi, quando vedo che così pochi di tutti i nobili defendavano la disgraziata Regina, chi davvero credo sia innocentissima. Mi fa gran' pietà questa donna; e quando si riflette della gran' differenza che esiste fra il scelerato re, e questa regina pietosa e buona, che visita un servo ammalato dal peste, s'arrabia; lui, il di cui carattere voi stesso avete depinto tanto bene, come pessimo; e lei il di cui più grande fallo e di divertirse colla sua servitù, invece di stare sola soletta quando i grandi servili d' Inghilterra l'hanno abandonati intieramente. Si sa bene che era i espioni che feciono il sentimento contro di lei, che esiste in Italia. Ma non ostante questo sentimento forte tutti i Italiani dicono che per certo la evidenza non era assai per condannarla —e davvero mi pare che hanno un opinione molto più favorevole per lei dopo codesto processo, che avanti. Tutti son inorridito dalla indecenza del processo infame per sempre.

Recevevo intanto una lettera dalla cara Marianna, che ci dice che voi ci aveste scritto una lettera, ma fin' ora questo foglio tanto sospirato non è arrivato.

Bisogna che vi parlerei, amico mio, d'una conoscenza che abbiamo fatto con un Professore a Pisa. Lui è davvero il solo Italiano che ha cuore ed anima. Ha un spirito altissimo, un ingegno profondo, e un' elequanza che trasporta. I poveri Pisani lo credono matto; e raccontano tante storiette di lui che ci fa credere che davvero è un poco stravagante, o per parlare in Inglese—*eccentric*. Ma lui dice—Mi credano matto e mi fa piacere che si sbaglierebbero così; ma forse il tempo verra quando vedrano che sia la pazzia di Bruto. Ogni sera viene ala nostra casa e sempre fa le nostre delizie colle di sue idee originale. Parla una bellissima lingua Italiana, tutto differente della idioma di oggi, che ci fa credere d' udire il Boccaccio o il Macchiavelli parlando come scrissono.

Poi abbiamo fatto conoscenza con un' Improvisatore—un' uomo di gran' talento—e molto forte nel Greco, e con un genio poetico incomparabile. Improvise con un fuoco e justezza ammirabile. Il suo sujetto era il desti no futuro d' Italia. Rammentò che Petrarca disse che ni le alpe altissime ni il mare bastava a difendere questo paese vacillante e vecchio dai Padroni forestieri—Ma disse



which has frozen all your love for us. I certainly think, however, that you in England are harder and harsher than we, when I see that so few of all the nobles defended the unfortunate Queen,<sup>2</sup> whom I really think is most innocent. I have great pity for this woman and when one considers the great difference between the villainous King and this piteous and good Queen, who goes to visit a servant struck down by the plague, one gets furious. He, whose character you have yourself portrayed so well, as one of the worst, and she, whose greatest fault is to enjoy herself amongst her servants instead of staying alone by herself, when entirely abandoned by the slavish grandees of England. It is well known that the feeling against her which exists in Italy was aroused by the spies. Notwithstanding this strong feeling, however, all Italians say that the

lui—vedo crescere le alpe—e alzare e turbare il mare stesso per impedire i di noi nemici. Sfortunata mente lui, come qualche poeta della nostra patria, trove piu piacere nei applausi momentari d'un teatro e le feste che lo fanno le donne, che di studiare per la posterità.

Vedete che intanto conoscemo ogni giorno un poco piu dei Italiani, e restiamo un grandissimo interesse nella guerra minacciata a Napoli. che faranno? I nobili di Napoli sono indipendente e bravi; ma il popolo e schiavo. Chi sa se la milizia resisteranno le arme degli Austriani. Quanti e tanti Italiani sospirano per la libertà, ma come in ogni paese i poveri non hanno potere, e i ricchi mai vogliono rischiare i di loro denari. I Italiani amano i denari quasi piu dalle Inglese—I ricchi d'Inghilterra amano l'oro, ma i nobili d'Italia son innamorati di rame ed il spiccio i quattrini (half farthings) ricevono da loro tanto rispetto quanto i shillings con noi altri.

V'e un' altra conoscenza nostra romanesca e patetica e una fancilla di dieci novii anni—figlia d'un nobile Fiorentino, bellissima—d'un gran' genio—chi scrive Italiana con un eleganza e delicatezza chi eguala i migliore autori della migliore età d'Italia—Ma e infelicissima—La sua madre è una pessima donna: e essendo gelosa dai talenti e la bellezza della di sua figlia, la rinchiude in convento dove non vede mai che le cameriere e le idiote. Ne esce mai ma chiusa in due piccole stanze che guardano sulla *kitchen garden* poco pittoresco del convento, lamenta sempre la sua pietosa condizione—La sola sua speranza è di maritarsi Ma la sua esistenza stessa e quasi un secreto—e che sposa liza sarai Vi dirò, amico mio come si maritano in questo paese. E posso assicurarvi della verita perche al momento che scrivo, ho davante i di miei occhi una proposizione per una ragazza Pisana—Il avvocato chi è impiegato per fare questa proposta manda una foglia che comincia con—"Il giovane, col quale si desidera congiungere in matrimonio la Giovane proposta, è nel anno dieci settimo; e statura grande, complesso, senza, imperfezione, di ottima salute, robusto e avvenute. Egli è di candidi costumi, ed una saviezza incomparabile; è studioso e bastantemente innotrato nello studio delle belle lettere, a cui indeffessa mente si applica." Segue allora una descrizione della sua famiglia e la di sua fortuna e espetazione; e del dote che aspetta—e finisce questo capo d'opera così: "Il matrimonio dovra effettuarsi due anni dopo la stipulazione del detto contratto. Allorché i Genitori della Giovane proposta verranno approvate le soprascritte condizione sara data immediate con gnizione del Giovane di cui si tratta. È necessario in fine di sapersi l' età della Giovane proposta." Ecco una spozializia Italiana! di piu hanno un grandissimo orrore dei Matrimonii che si fanno senza il consentamento dei genitori. Sicuramente la tirannia domestica ha piu di forza qui nei oppinioni—anzi nelle legge; tutt'ora che con pochi eszezione i genitori sono suavi ed indulgenti nei affari commune di giorno in giorno.—

Abbiamo avuto punto inverno fin' ora—godiamo d'un'aria dolce e un bel sole di dicembre—le piove del' autun no son passati—e il paese quantunque è sfogliato e ignudo ride sotto i raggi d'un cielo chiarissimo—Lasciate—o mio amico i vostri guai—e per qualche minute godiate voi anche della mia bella Italia—Spero che questo foglio avra questo effetto—Dio vi guarda—voi e tutti che vi appartierono—Shelley e Chiarina madono mille e poi mille salute affettuosi—addio—

La vostra amica costanto—Marina.

<sup>2</sup> George IV had for many years wished to rid himself of his wife, Caroline. When upon the death of his father, George III, on June 29, 1820, he became king in fact, he had her name removed from the prayers for the royal family. She returned from Italy to combat this attempt to dispose of her royal rank, and was put on trial for adultery. Though the King's ministers carried out his will, popular disapproval rapidly mounted. The Queen became something of a heroine, and the King's efforts failed. This affair, which created widespread excitement for a considerable time, was the subject of Shelley's satirical drama in the style of Aristophanes, entitled *Oedipus Tyrannus*, which was suggested by the grunting of the pigs under the Shelleys' windows while they were at the Baths of Pisa in the summer of 1820.

evidence was certainly not sufficient for condemning her and, in truth, it seems to me that they have now, after the trial, a much more favourable opinion of her than previously. Everyone has been horrified by the indecency of this ever infamous trial.

In the meantime we received a letter from dear Marianne who tells us that you had written a letter to us; but up to the present, this letter so much looked forward to has not arrived.

I must tell you, my friend, of a professor [Pacchiani]<sup>3</sup> with whom we have become acquainted in Pisa. He is really the only Italian who has a heart and soul. He is very high spirited, has a profound mind and an eloquence which enraptures. The poor people of Pisa think him mad and they tell many little stories about him, which make us believe that he is really somewhat singular or, as the English say, "eccentric." He, however, says, "They think I am mad and it gives me pleasure that they should be deceiving themselves in that way; the time, however, may perhaps come when they will see that it is the madness of Brutus." Every evening he comes to our house and always delights us with his original ideas. He speaks a most beautiful Italian, quite different from the present idiom, so that we receive the impression of listening to Boccaccio or Machiavelli, as he speaks as they have written.

We have further made the acquaintance of an Improvisor [Sgricci],<sup>4</sup> a man of great talent, very well up in Greek and of an incomparable poetic mind. He improvises with admirable fervour and justice. His subject was the future destiny of Italy; he recalled to mind that Petrarch said that neither the highest Alps nor the sea were sufficient to defend this vacillating and ancient country from foreign masters; but he said, "I see the Alps growing [higher] and even the sea rising and becoming troubled so as to keep off our enemies." Unfortunately, he also, as some poets of our country, finds greater pleasure in the momentary applause of a theatre and in the admiration of women, than in studying for posterity.

You see that in the meantime we get to know a little more every day

<sup>3</sup> As this letter and Mary's journal show, the Shelleys' circle of acquaintances was suddenly enlarged in the last days of November and the first part of December, 1820. Francesco Pacchiani (b. October 4, 1771) was mainly responsible for introducing them to these people—Emilia Viviani, Mavrocordato, Sgricci, Taaffe, and several others. Pacchiani was a most interesting individual: brilliant, witty, vociferous, irresponsible, boastful, hypocritical. He was or had been a professor of logic and metaphysics and later of physics at the University of Pisa. Though at first he fascinated Shelley and Mary, he soon became for them, like Colonel Finch, a person to be avoided whenever possible. They adopted the popular Pisan denomination of him, "il diavolo." Mary later recounts some of the current scandals about him. See Dowden, II, 359–61; E. Viviani della Robbia, *Vita di una Donna* [Emilia Viviani] (Florence, G. E. Sansoni, 1936), 45–51; and Letters 109 and 110. Marchesa della Robbia's book reproduces a portrait of Pacchiani.

<sup>4</sup> Tommaso Sgricci (d. 1836), the most famous *improvvisatore* of his day, was introduced to the Shelleys on December 1, 1820. He was then twenty-seven years of age. The Shelleys considered his inspired improvisations marvelous. They heard him three times: on December 20, 1820, at Pisa, in *Iphigenia in Tauris*; on January 12, 1821, (Mary only) at Lucca, in *Ines de Castro*; and on January 22, 1821, at Pisa, in *The Death of Hector*. (See Dowden, II, 366–68, two of his dates are wrong; and Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 174–77. See Letters 107, 109, 110.)

of the Italians and we take a very lively interest in the war threatening Naples—what will they do? The nobles of Naples are independent and brave, but the people are slaves,—who knows whether the militia will [be able to] resist the Austrian arms!

All the Italians, without exception, sigh for liberty; but, as in every country, the poor have no power and the wealthy ones do not wish to risk their money. The Italians love money perhaps more than the English. The wealthy classes in England love gold, but the nobles of Italy are fond of copper and small coin. The *quattrini* (half farthings) are considered by them as much as the shillings by us. There is another acquaintance of ours, romantic and pathetic, a young girl of nineteen years of age [Emilia Viviani],<sup>5</sup> the daughter of a Florentine noble; very beautiful, very talented, who writes Italian with an elegance and delicacy equal to the foremost authors of the best Italian epoch. She is, however, most unhappy. Her mother is a very bad woman; and, as she is jealous of the talents and beauty of her daughter, she shuts her up in a convent where she sees nothing else but the servants and idiots. She never goes out, but is shut up in two small rooms which look out on the not very picturesque kitchen garden of the convent. She always laments her pitiful condition. Her only hope is to get married, but even her existence is nearly a secret, and what marriage will it be? I will tell you, my friend, how they marry in this country. I can assure you of the truth of this because, while I am writing, I have before my eyes a demand in marriage of a girl of Pisa. The advocate who is employed to make this proposal sends a letter which commences as follows: "The young man with whom it is desired to join in marriage the girl in question is in his 17th year. He is tall and well-built, without any imperfections, in the best of health, strong and good looking, he is of good moral character and his knowledge is unsurpassed; he is studious and sufficiently advanced in the study of the *belles-lettres* to which he earnestly devotes himself." Then follows a description of his family and of his fortune and expectations and of the dowry which he expects, and this masterpiece finishes as follows: "The marriage will have to be celebrated two years after the making of this contract. When the parents of the intended bride shall have approved the above conditions the name of the young man in question will be immediately made known. Finally, it is necessary to know the age of the intended bride." This is an Italian marriage! Moreover, they have a great horror of marriages which are concluded without the consent of the parents. Certainly domestic tyranny has greater power here in the minds of people as well as in law; notwithstanding this, the parents, with few exceptions, are tender and indulgent in every day life.

<sup>5</sup> Emilia Viviani, as the inspiration of Shelley's *Epipsychidion*, is too well known to need comment. First introduced to Claire by Pacchiani on November 26, she was, a few days later, visited by Shelley, Mary, and Medwin. To Medwin we are indebted for many valuable facts about Emilia. But E. Marchesa della Robbia's recent (1936) *Vita di una Donna* shows that Medwin (followed by Dowden, II, 369) was mistaken about Emilia's confinement being the result of a *stepmother's* jealousy. The jealous person was her own mother, as the present letter confirms.

Up to the present we have not had any winter. We enjoy mild air and beautiful sunshine in December; the autumn rains have passed and the country, although bare and leafless, laughs under the brightness of the very clear sky. My friend, leave your troubles behind and enjoy for a few minutes also my beautiful Italy. I hope that this letter will have this effect. May God preserve you and all yours. Shelley and Chiarina [Claire] send many thousands of affectionate greetings. Goodbye.

Your constant friend,  
Marina

ADDRESS: *to be forwarded immediately*/ Leigh Hunt Esq-/ To the care of/ Mess. Olliers—Booksellers/ Vere St./ Bond St./ Londra Ingleterre [*Redirected to*] Rev. Mr. Shepherd/ 55, Guildford Street. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ DE. 19/ 1820. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2747); A.L. (signed "Marina"), 4 pp. 4to (in Italian). PRINTED: (Translated) *Letters*, 93–99. TEXT: From translation from *Letters*, 93–99 (with some alterations). Italian text from original letter.

102. *To [Marianne Hunt]*\*<sup>1</sup>

[Pisa] Dec. 3, 1820.

You must know that all intercourse between the G[isborne]s & us is broken off—it were long & tedious in a letter to explain but they have behaved so as to pain & disappoint us extremely—that is to say on Mrs. G[isborne]'s account for I do not count the others. And their folly (as is usual in such cases) equals their—what word shall I put—*baseness*—I hardly think the word too strong—however do not mistake it is an affair of pelf—but acting ill on that score that [they] had no write [*sic*] to pretend to uprightness—enough of them.

I long exceedingly to hear from you again, my best girl—in about a week you could fill a sheet & send it to satisfy my anxiety.

When shall we see you again—God only knows. I foresee one only event which can bring us to England<sup>2</sup> Are we not wanderers on the face of the earth—take pity on us & by loving us still let us have some point in life—

How is your health

Yours affectionately forever  
Mary W Shelley

ORIGINAL: British Museum (Add. MS 38,523, f.56); A.L.S., 2 pp. (a small strip of 4to size paper, written on both sides). PRINTED: Grylls, *Mary Shelley*, 115n (quot., 7 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

103. *To John Gisborne*

[Casa Galetti, Pisa, December, 1820]

We send the papers<sup>3</sup> but as we want them again be so kind as to return

<sup>1</sup> This note, which may or may not be complete, was doubtless enclosed in the letter to Hunt. For its contents see Letter 100, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> That is, the death of Shelley's father.

<sup>3</sup> The copies of Galignani's newspaper. This brief note shows clearly the breach between the Shelleys and the Gisbornes. The Shelleys had been at Casa Galetti since October 29.

them by the first opportunity—directed Casa Galetti Lung'Arno—

I cant write a word more for I have a cold in my eyes

Yours

M W S.

ADDRESS: Signore Giovanni Gisborne/ per ricapito al forno d'Isidoro/ via dei Cavalieri/ Livorno. ENDORSED: Pisa, Dec. 1820, Casa Galetti. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.413-14); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 360. TEXT: From original letter.

### 104. To Maria Gisborne\*

13 Dec. [1820]

Casa Galetti, Pisa

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

If you w[oul]d have the kindness to send us a list of the things you have of ours I could more easily tell what should be sent to us—The articles of clothing if you will get them marked & rubbed a little on a red brick floor will pass the Dogana My parasol since I am not like an Italian afraid of the sun of December may remain safely in your custody.<sup>4</sup>

We are very sorry to hear of Mr. G[isborne]'s prolonged ill health—this weather is not I am afraid very favourable to him Shelley is by no means well — Vaccà says that his disease is entirely nervous and nephretic.

I had put the papers apart for you & by an accident many of them were destroyed I send all I can collect— The present crisis in England is wonderfully awful It appears like a huge crag tottering on the edge of a precipice. We are also highly interested in the result of the Austrian counsels against Naples.

I envy your Decameron evening— I am at present very busy with Greek & Calderon

I hope to hear that Mr. G[isborne] gets better—has he seen Vaccà

I write in haste you will therefore excuse this scrawl— You will be so kind as to send the flannels—child's stockings, [*in Shelley's hand*] new books, Lord Bacon, & the Greek Tragedians &c without delay & you will much oblige yours ever

M W S.

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.415-16); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 549; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 361. TEXT: From original letter.

### 105. To Maria Gisborne

Pisa [December (c. 15) 1820]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

Have the kindness to give Pepi<sup>1</sup> the parcel of new books, combs, brushes,

<sup>4</sup> The Shelleys evidently had left a good many things at the Gisbornes' house after their residence there in the summer of 1820. The Gisbornes, who were gradually getting ready to return to England, probably wished to get them out of the way. The clothing needed to be soiled in order not to be subject to a high customs charge—or so I conjecture.

<sup>1</sup> Probably the Shelleys' servant or someone occasionally employed by them.

tape, &c., leaving the rest for a future day. I send you some fresh papers, but I believe that there is a vacuum. I cannot make it up however. The papers are exceedingly uninteresting. Pacchiani is no great favourite of ours. He disgusted Shelley by telling a dirty story.<sup>2</sup> So much for him. Adieu.

Yours,  
M. W. S.

[P.S.] I hope Mr. Gisborne is better.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 568; Dowden, II, 361 (quot., 2 lines). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

## 106. To Maria Gisborne

[Pisa, December 16–24, 1820]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Have the kindness to consign to Pèpi all the articles contained in your list I send you the money as you wish be so good as to write a line to say that all is right.

I hope this mild weather agrees with you & Mr. Gisborne. Winter has not begun yet— What a delicious climate this Italy is!

Pèpi is waiting therefore I have not time for another word 30 crowns

[Unsigned]

ENDORSED: December 1820 or Jan. 1821. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.464); A.L. (unsigned), 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 361. TEXT: From original letter.

## 107. To Leigh Hunt

[Pisa] December 29th 1820.

My dear Friend

We have been very anxious to hear from you since we saw that your paper had been honoured with the peculiar attention of the A[ttorney] G[eneral] yet no letters come.<sup>1</sup> I am convinced that you will escape when it comes to trial—but an Acquittal must be bought not only with anxiety—fear & labour but also with the money you can so ill spare. Before this comes to hand you will of course have written—one of your letters which are as rare as Fountains in the Stony Arabia will have given us a brief pleasure. Why do you not write oftener?— Ah! why are you not rich, peaceful and enjoying? We have just been delighted with a parcel of your Indicators but they also afford full proof

<sup>2</sup> Mary's journal for Thursday, December 14, 1820, notes: "Pacchiani in the evening." Claire's diary adds, "He is indecent."—Dowden's copy of *Shelley and Mary*, III, 550.

<sup>1</sup> Since November, Hunt had been ill and unable to write for the *Examiner* or to continue the *Indicator*. Late in November the attorney-general prosecuted the *Examiner* for its comments on Queen Caroline's trial. (Dowden's note, II, 439: "John Hunt's offence . . . was a description of the House of Commons as consisting in the main of public criminals rather than public guardians.") On February 25, 1821, the verdict was reached. This sent John Hunt, the proprietor, to prison for one year in Cold-bath Fields, and required £1000 as security for proper conduct in the future. See Edmund Blunden, *Leigh Hunt's "Examiner" Examined* (London, Cobden-Sanderson, 1928), 106–108.

that you are not as happy as you ought to be— Yet how beautiful they are. That one upon the deaths of young children was a piece of as fine writing & of as exquisite feeling as I ever read— To us you know it must have been particularly affecting— Yet there is one thing well apparent—you, my dear Hunt, never lost a child or the ideal immortality w[oul]d not suffice to your imagination as it naturally does thinking only of those whom you loved more from the overflowing of affection, than from their being the hope, the rest, the purpose, the support, and the recompense of life.

I hardly know whether I do not tease you with too many letters, yet you have made no complaint of that, and besides you always like to hear about the Italians and it is almost impossible not to write something pleasing to you from this divine country, if praises of its many beauties and its delights be interesting to you. I have now an account to give you of a wonderful and beautiful exhibition of talent which we have been witnesses of; an exhibition peculiar to the Italians and like their climate—their vegetation and their country fervent fertile and mixing in wondrous proportions the picturesque cultivated & the wild until they become not as in other countries one the foil of the other but they mingle and form a spectacle new and beautiful. We were the other night at the theatre where the Improvisatore [Sgricci] whom I mentioned in my last letter delivered an extempore tragedy. Conceive of a poem as long as a Greek Tragedy, interspersed with choruses, the whole plan conceived in an instant— The ideas and verses & scenes flowing in rich succession like the perpetual gush of a fast falling cataract. The ideas poetic and just; the words the most beautiful, *scette* and grand that his exquisite Italian afforded. He is handsome—his person small but elegant—and his motions graceful beyond description: his action was perfect; and the freedom of his motions outdo the constraint which is ever visible in an English actor— The changes of countenance were of course not so fine as those I have witnessed on the English stage, for he had not conned his part and set his features but it was one impulse that filled him; an unchanged deity who spoke within him, and his voice surpassed in its modulations the melody of music. The subject was Iphigenia in Tauris. It was composed on the Greek plan (indeed he followed Euripides in his arrangement and in many of his ideas)—without the deviation of acts and with choruses. Of course if we saw it written there would have been many slight defects of management—defects amended when seen—but many of the scenes were perfect—and the recognition of Orestes and Iphigenia was worked up beautifully.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 101, note 4. In an interesting and well-written article entitled "The English in Italy" in the *Westminster Review* for October, 1826, 325–41, Mary includes several of their experiences in and observations on Italy. Since the article (anonymous) has not been reprinted or quoted from, it is worth giving here her account of Sgricci and the three performances which they witnessed:

"Sgricci may be given as an example. He is well read, and profoundly versed in the works of the Greek metaphysicians and historians, as well as their poets. The mode of his improvisation is wonderful, and different from the usual style of these exhibitions. When he comes on the

I do not know how this talent may be appreciated in the other cities of Italy, but the Pisans are noted for their want of love and of course entire ignorance of the fine arts— Their opera is miserable, their theatre the worst in Italy. The theatre was nearly empty on this occasion— The students of the University half filled the pit and the few people in the boxes were foreigners except two Pisan families who went away before it was half over. God knows what this man w[oul]d be if he laboured and become a poet for posterity instead of an Improvisatore for the present— I am enclined to think that in the perfection in which he possesses this art it is by no means an inferior power to that of a *printed poet*— There have been few Improvisatores who have like him joined a cultivated education and acquirements in languages rare among foreigners— If however his auditors were refined—and as the oak or the rock to the lightning—feeling in their inmost souls the penetrative fire of his poetry—I sh[oul]d not find fault with his making perfection in this art the aim of his exertions— But to Improvise to a Pisan audience is to scatter otto of roses among the overweighing stench of a charnel house:— pearls to swine were œconomy in comparison. As Shelley told him the other night he appeared in Pisa as Dante among the ghosts— Pisa is a city of the dead and they shrunk from his living presence. The name of this Improvisatore is Sgricci, and I see that his name is mentioned in your literary pocket book. This has made me think that it were an interesting plan for this same pretty pocket book if you were to give some small interesting account—not exactly a biographical sketch, but *anecdotal* and somewhat critical of the various authors of the list. Sgricci has been accused of carbonarism whether truly or not I cannot judge— I should think not or he w[oul]d be trying to

stage, his personal appearance, animated countenance, and regular features, lost in his daily costume, strike you with admiration. It is the custom for those who choose, to leave at the door of the theatre a slip of paper, on which is written a subject for a tragic drama. We were present at three of these performances. The subject of the first was 'Ifigenia in Tauride;' the plan of the tragedy was closely copied from Euripides; but the words and poetry were his own, and we were continually startled by images of dazzling beauty, and a flow of language which never degenerated into mere words, but, on the contrary, was instinct with energy and pathos.

"Inez de Castro was a tragedy he gave at Lucca, the subject being imposed on him by the arch-duchess, who was in the theatre. When towards the end, he caused the audience to understand that the prince, Don Pedro, husband of Inez, drawing a curtain, suddenly displays to his father the bodies of his murdered wife and children, the same thrill was felt, nay, far greater than if the real mock bodies (the implied bull must be excused) had been brought forward. His words were so living, that you saw them, not decked out with stage trickery, but in the true livery of death, livid, stiff, and cold. The last tragedy we heard was the Death of Hector. In it you were transported within the walls of Troy, and heard mad Cassandra denouncing its fall. Speaking afterwards to the poet, he said that he did not remember much about any other part; but he had a vivid recollection, that when he poured forth the ravings of the prophetess, he no longer saw the theatre; Troy was around him; Troy burning; Priam stabbed at his altar, and the women dragged lamenting away in chains. From all this magical creation of talent, what resulted? The poet himself forgets all his former imaginations, and is hurried on to create fresh imagery, while the effects of his former inspirations are borne away with the breath that uttered them, never again to be recalled—"

"'Nec revocare situs, ant jungere carmina curat.' For the rest, he acquired the enthusiastic praises of some few of the more refined of his countrymen—for Sgricci's poetry is of too classic and elevated a nature to please the multitude—and the animated recollection of those few English who understand sufficient Italian to appreciate his genius."



harvest at Naples instead of extemporizing here. From what we have heard of him I believe him to be good and his manners are gentle and amiable—while the rich flow of his beautifully pronounced language is as pleasant to the ear as a sonata of Mozart. I must tell you that some wiseacre Professors of Pisa wanted to put Sgricci down at the theatre and their vile envy might have frightened the God from his temple if an Irishman who chanced to be in the same box with him [them] had not compelled him [*sic*] to silence. The ring-leader of this gang is called Rosini a man, a speaker of folly in a city of fools—bad envious talkative presumptuous;—one—“chi mai parla bene di chichessia—o di quei che vivono o dei morti.” He has written a long poem which no one has ever read and like the illustrious Sotherby gives the law to a few distinguished Blues of Pisa Well good night; tomorrow I will finish my letter and talk to you about our unf[ortu]nate young friend, Emilia Viviani.

It is grievous to see this beautiful girl wearing out the best years of her life in an odious convent where both mind and body are sick from want of the appropriate exercise of each— I think she has great talent if not genius—or if not an internal fountain how could she have acquired the mastery she has of her own language which she writes so beautifully, or those ideas which lift her so far above the rest of the Italians. She has not studied much and now hopeless from a five years confinement every thing disgusts her and she looks with hatred & distaste even on the alleviations of her situation. Her only hope is in a marriage which her parents tell her is concluded although she has never seen the person intended for her—nor do I think the change of situation will be much for the better for he is a younger brother and will live in the house with his mother whom they say is *molta secante*—Yet she may then have the free use of her limbs—she may then be able to walk out among the fields—vineyards & woods of her country and see the mountains and the sky and not be as now a dozen steps to the right and then back to the left another dozen which is the longest walk her convent garden affords—and that you may be sure she is very seldom tempted to take.

Winter began with us on Xmas day—not that we have yet had frost but a cold wind sweeps over us and the sky is covered with dark clouds and the cold sleet mizzles down— I understand that you have had as yet a mild winter—This and the plentiful harvest will keep the poor somewhat happier this year.—Yet I dare say you now see the white snow before your doors. Even warm as we are here Shelley suffers a great deal of pain in every way—perhaps more even than last winter

(Jan. 1, 1821) Although I almost think it of bad augury to wish you a good new year yet as I finish my letter on this day I cannot help adding the Compliments of the Season and wishing all happiness peace & enjoyment for this coming year to you and my dear Marianne and all who belong to you—I thank you for all the good wishes I know you have made for us— We are

quiet now—last year there were many turbulences—perhaps during this there will be fewer—

We have made acquaintance with a Greek, a Prince Mauro Codarti<sup>3</sup>—a very pleasant man profound in his own language and who although he has applied to English little more than a month begins to relish its beauties & to understand the genius of its expressions in a wonderful manner— He was *done up* by some alliance I believe with Ali Pacha and has taken refuge in Italy from the Constantinopolitan bowstring. He has related to us some very infamous conduct of the English powers in Greece of which I sh[oul]d exceedingly like to get the documents & to place them in Grey Bennett's or Sir F[ran]cis B[urdett]'s hands—they might serve to give another knock to this wretched system of things.

We are very anxious to hear the event of the meeting of parliament as I suppose you all are in England—but perhaps we exiles are ultrapolitical—but certainly I have some hopes that something fortunate will soon happen for the state of things in England.

And Italy! The King of Naples has gone to Trophau with the consent of his parliament and that is the latest news— We begin, we hope to see the crimson clouds of rising peace— And if all be quiet southward we have some thoughts of emigrating there next summer—

Adieu my dear Hunt

Most affectionately yours

Marina

[P.S., *the first words are blotted out*] . . . will be a better girl than last time—let her [Marianne] make up a small parcel—a dozen papers of middle sized pins—an assortment of good needles—a small pointed pair of Scissars—an excellent penknife of several blades—a few sticks of sealing wax—let the needles be in a very small morocco case such as they make on purpose for papers of needles—a steel topped thimble and some ounces of stocking cotton—add also a few hundreds of Brand's pens—and send this to Horace Smith—asking him if he has sent our parcel if he has let it be sent to Peacock written on the outside to be sent to me by the next parcel—

Ollier will answer her demand for the amount of these things. Adieu

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Mess. Olliers. Booksellers/ Vere St. Bond St./ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ JA. 18/ 1821. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2748); A.L. (signed "Marina"), 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 160; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 552–53; Dowden, II, 371–72; Marshall, I, 278–79 (all quite incomplete); *Letters*, 100–108 (omits postscript). TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> "Saturday, Dec. 2 [1820].—Pacchiani and a Greek Prince call—Prince [Alexander] Mavrocordato." So Mary's journal reads, and thus was the brilliant young Greek prince, two years older than Shelley, introduced into the suddenly expanded circle of the Shelleys' acquaintances in December, 1820. Mavrocordato, a Greek exile, was the center of a small group of Greek exiles in Pisa, including his uncle, Prince Caradja, and his cousin, Princess Argiropoli, to whom he introduced the Shelleys. Mavrocordato assisted Mary with the study of Greek, which she had begun recently, and she in turn gave him lessons in English, which he, however, grasped so rapidly

108. *To Maria Gisborne\**[Pisa] Saturday, Dec. 29th [30, 1820]<sup>1</sup>

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Will you be so kind as to give Pepi the rest of the child's stockings—a flannel shirt—and Æschylus. I think Olliers Miscellany<sup>2</sup> was in your list—will you send it us.

Shelley has had a cold in his eyes which has prevented his writing and reading for above a fortnight— How does this cold weather agree with Mr. Gisborne I hope he keeps close to the fire and lets the winds howl vainly

I am sorry that I cannot send the papers but Claire is gone to Florence<sup>3</sup> for a few weeks and I have promised to send them to her—she shall forward them to you thence or return them to me in numbers and then you shall have them if you do not think them too stale.

Ever truly yours,  
M W. S.

ADDRESS: La Signora Maria Gisborne/ Casa Ricci/ Al'Origine/ Livorno. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f. 417); A.L.S., 1 p. (7¾ x 8¾ inches). PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 362. TEXT: From original letter.

109. *To Claire Clairmont*

Pisa,  
Sunday night, Jan. [14], 1821

My dear Claire

I must now give you some account of my adventures since I last wrote—The Vicar of Wakefield for many years recorded no other migration than from the blue bed to the brown—mine is one of far greater importance since it purposes to narrate a migration from Pisa to Lucca. Yet do not be terrified at my formal beginning, & fancy robbers, and broken roads, & overturned coaches—no, I have no events to record except a journey hence to Lucca—a day spent there, and my return.

I mentioned that on Thursday Sgricci was to give an Accademia which I

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that he had little need for her help. On April 1, 1821, he announced to Shelley the Proclamation of Prince Ypsilanti, and left Pisa on June 26, 1821, to take his part in the Greek Revolution, in which he distinguished himself. Shelley dedicated to him his *Hellas*. See Dowden, II, 359, 361–63, and Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 177–78.

<sup>1</sup> Saturday was the thirtieth.

<sup>2</sup> Ollier's *Literary Miscellany, in Prose and Verse, by Several Hands* (1820). Apparently only one number appeared. In this was Peacock's "The Four Ages of Poetry," which excited Shelley to answer with his "A Defence of Poetry," intended for the *Miscellany*. The "Defence" was sent to Ollier, but was not published until 1840, when it was included by Mary Shelley in the *Essays, Letters, &c.*

<sup>3</sup> Claire went to Florence on October 20, accompanied by Shelley. Her presence in the Shelley household had again become quite irritating to Mary, and that, together with the scandalous tales being spread among the English by Paolo, made her residence in a separate house and town prudent. In Florence she lived in the house of Professor Bojti.

had little hope of attending<sup>1</sup>— Teusday and Wednesday came, and I had still less—for Shelleys boils got worse—his face swelled dreadfully, and though not very ill he was in no travelling condition— However at his persuasion I cooked up a party with Pacchiani & Thursday evening at 6 o'clock I, Babe, Pacchiani & Maria set out for Lucca. It had rained the whole day & the day before besides—but it held up as we went and we had a pleasant ride— It was eight when we arrived, and we hastened to the theatre— We entered the box of a friend of P[acchiani]—there was no Sgricci—but a bad orchestra—a screaming Prima donna & a worse Basso pouring forth melifluous notes on an inattentive audience. The Accademia was put off until the following night—& Pacchiani who had already missed one lesson in that week was obliged to return the next morning to Lucca— And how could I stay & go alone?

Pacchiani introduced me at the theatre to a friend of his called Georgine—a mathematician & a man of talent—& very very gentlemanly in his way— It would seem that this gentleman took compassion on me, and he came early the next morning with a message from one of the first ladies of Lucca a friend of his to offer me her box & company if I would stay. So I staid and Pacchiani, to my infinite relief, returned to Pisa.

The Marchesa Eleonora Bernardini who was thus polite to me is thus described by Pacchiani— È richissima, ma questa nulla è la prima donna di Lucca; buona come un angelo—ha piu genio che alcuna altra donna d'Italia—quando parla è come un bel libro—e scribe lettere venissime—come la Viviani; la stessa a cosa—ma ha l'uso del mondo—e poi è richissima, ma questa nulla—

She is thus described by Sgricci è ricca assai—ma sicuro questa è nulla per lei perche spende quasi niente—la di lei erudizione e quella che nasce delle giornale—Lei è la piu gran politica in Italia—ogni sera alla ma conversazione legge con voce alta le gazette—una dopo l'altra dal capo final ultimo—è dogmatica assai.

I have seen so little of her that I can hardly decide between the two opinions, yet I will tell you what I think. I think that she is most exceedingly polite, easy mannered & pleasing— A Blue she certainly is—from her remarks on Sgricci's improvisaing and her evident struggles to bring all things into her square & height I should instantly decide that she had no genius— Her love of journals is probably true since she sent me a couple to amuse me— Well—she sent to ask me when I w[oul]d have her carri[a]ge & sent her secretary to conduct [me] to see some pictures in the town—and in the evening came for me to go with her to the theatre.

We went late and Sgricci had nearly finished his canzone— When it was over some one came to the box to call out our male attendant—*un certo cavaliere*

<sup>1</sup> Mary wrote in her journal (*Shelley and Mary*, III, 566–67, 569): "Thursday, Jan. 11 [1821].—In the evening go with Pacchiani to Lucca. Friday, Jan. 12.—At Lucca. Sgricci calls. Call on Madame Bernardini. Go with her to the Accademia: subject, 'Ignez di Castro.' Saturday, Jan. 13.—Return to Pisa. Call on Emilia Viviani, Sgricci, and afterwards Pacchiani; all in the evening.—Sunday, Jan. 14.— . . . Write to Clare." (See Letter 107, note 2.)

(who had known L[ord] B[yron] at Rome who had made him a Regalo of his works) who presently returned to say that the duchess of Lucca who was present had ordered S[gricci] to treat the subject of Ignez di Castro and that he did not know the story. Ignez is not as you said the daughter of Count Julian— I knew nothing of the story—the Sig[no]ra B[ernardini] little—so we made out a story among us which by the bye is little like the Ignezs of Camoens as I have since found though it may bear some affinity to the French tragedies on that subject. However while S[gricci] delivered the argument I heard someone in the pit say—*Illa fallito nel 'istorica*. However unhistorical the argument of his tragedy might be Sgricci acquitted himself to admiration in the conduct and passion & poetry of his piece. As he went on he altered the argument as it had been delivered to him and wound up the tragedy with a scene both affecting and sublime. Peter of Arragon wished to marry his son Sancho to a Princess of France but Sancho obstinately refused and neither his mother's tears his fathers menaces curses or entreaties could induce him to comply. In truth he was already married to Inez and had two children. Pietro irritated by his sons opposition casts him into prison, and then Ignez to save her husband comes forward & confesses that she is the obstacle which causes his disobedience The Sig[no]ra B[ernardini] had said that the story was that this came to[o] late for that Sancho had already been put to death by his father, who now put Ignez to death also. But Sgricci—as one inspired became possessed of the truth as he continued to improvise, and leaving this false route came upon that which was the real one without knowing it— Was he not inspired?— While Ignez is trying to move the compassion of the king, Sancho who had been freed by his mother comes in wild and aghast— The king pretended to [be] moved by their prayers—said that he would sanctify their marriage, & takes Ignez & the two children under his care giving orders for the ceremonial—the moment comes Sancho arrives in confidence and his bride is produced by his inexorable father—dead.—It seems impossible that a tragedy represented by one man should in any way create illusion—others complained of the want of it—yet when Pietro unveiled the dead Ignez, when Sancho died in despair on her body, it seemed to me as if it were all there; so truly & passionately did his words depict the scene he wished to represent. The Sig[no]ra B[ernardini] said that it was *una cosa mediocra*—to me it appeared a miracle. Of course this lady was not quite silent during the whole time & I lost much of the poetry though nothing of the scenic effect of this exhibition.

The next morning I returned early to Pisa and found S[helley] a great deal better; though not well & still tormented with boils.

I like Pacchiani less & less. There is no truth in him—but a love of wealth and a boasting infinitely disgusting. It would require volumes to tell you all the proofs that dayly occur of this disposition. What think you of his relating how when David,<sup>2</sup> the divine David, first came out, how he seeing that he

<sup>2</sup>Giovanni Davide (1789–c. 1851), a celebrated Italian tenor.



CLAIRE CLAIRMONT

*from Emory W. Price's copy of the painting  
by Amelia Curran*

*Photograph of the painting  
courtesy of Newman Ivey White*



failed in some points of melody went to him & put him right, & how the applause of the Florentine audience crowned his instructions, & how the old David came to thank him. Emilia will perhaps relate to you the coin in which he intends to make her pay for his friendship so through her he is to gain favour & dinners from the English. When he talks of any one the first words are—*è ricco, ma questo è nullo—ma poi è richissimo*. And then his innumerable host of great acquaintances!—he would make one believe that he attracts the great as a milk pail does flies on a summer morning.

Of Emilia I have seen little since I last wrote, but she was in much better spirits when I did see her than I had found her for a long time before. Sgricci is returned from Lucca and will I fancy soon proceed to Florence— We want very much to cook up an Accademia for him here—but we have no power—P[acchiani] says that he can—perhaps he will—we shall see. To me, I own it is no slight delight to be a spectator (to use such a term) of the rich & continuous flow of his poetic extasies— I do believe them to be something divine— In a room he is amusing— I believe him to be good—time will shew if that be frankness which now looks like it—for as I read the other day in Sophocles—you may know whether a man be bad in a day but length of time alone discovers virtue. But on the theatre he is as a god.

Well good night— I will finish my letter tomorrow. I will keep back the papers a few days & then send them you with a parcel of such books as we have—and thus I think it will not be dearer than the postage of the papers.

(Monday morning) You see that you need not complain of want of letters from me since I write quite enough in all conscience. I write generally of an evening after tea. You have no idea how earnestly we desire the transfer of Mxxxxn [i.e., Medwin]<sup>3</sup> to Florence—in plain Italian he is a *Seccatura*—He sits with us & be one reading or writing he insists upon interrupting one every moment to read all the fine things he either writes or reads— Besides writing poetry he translates— He intends he says to translate all the fine passages of Dante &—has already the canto concerning Ugolino. Now not to say that he fills his verses with all possible commonplaces he understands his author very imperfectly—and when he cannot make sense of the words that are he puts in words of his own and calls it a misprint—so sometimes falsifying the historical fact always the sense he produces something as like Dante as a rotten crab apple is like a fine nonpareil. For instance those lines of Dante—but I have not time or paper for examples. We have had a droll letter from Hogg which I will send in the promised parcel. We have heard from no one else— I think the Williams<sup>4</sup> may stay a month here since Mxxxxn has taken

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Medwin, Shelley's cousin, had been visiting since October 22, 1820.

<sup>4</sup> In Switzerland, in the summer of 1820, Thomas Medwin had so interested Edward Ellerker Williams and his wife, Jane, in his cousin Shelley that they had decided to go to Pisa and make his acquaintance. They landed at Leghorn on January 13, 1821, and arrived in Pisa on Friday, January 19, on which date Mary wrote in her journal: "The Williams' arrive. Call on them, and they come here."—*Shelley and Mary*, III, 569. Williams was a lieutenant on half pay, and had served in the navy and in India (Dowden, II, 386). See Letter 206, note 3.



lodgings for them & then proceed to Florence— I hope he will go before— or at least when they come he will be much with them for otherwise S[helley] does nothing but conjugate the verb seccare & twist & turn Seccatura in all possible ways. He is Common Place personified—

Yesterday it rained all the afternoon—after a cloudy morning today is fine with I fancy a little tramontana. I wish you could *stringere amicizia* with Eliza—but I fear the attempt is vain at least you can do nothing more than you have done until she answers your letter.

S[helley] is now somewhat better—little Babe is well & merry— Do not send this long retarded stove<sup>5</sup> for I fancy it would only be ready to be lighted the day of our departure from these disagreeable lodgings.

I envy you the Gallery— I do not know what you can envy in us since now we are dried beyond our usual dustiness I do not think we shall come to Florence—if we do it will be only in the progress of a tour which I do not think we shall make—

There is no news in the papers of any kind so be patient during the fine days I hope we are to have & before the next rainy weather comes, I hope you will receive them. Pray write to Emilia— Pacchiani asked me for your name yesterday since he is going, he says to write to you—if he does pray preserve the letter—for as I believe no one ever saw even his handwriting it w[oul]d be a curiosity for a museum—

Ever Yours  
Mary W. S.

ADDRESS: A Mademoiselle/ Madlle de Clairmont/ Chez M. le Professeur Botji/ vis-a-vis au Palazzo Pitti/ Firenze. ORIGINAL: British Museum (T. J. Wise Collection); A.L.S., 8 pp. 4to, with envelope. PRINTED: (In part only) Dowden, II, 361, 365–66 (quots., 2 & 19 lines); Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 175–76 (quot., 22 lines); *A Shelley Library*, edited by Wise, 8–9 (about half). TEXT: From original letter.

## 110. To Claire Clairmont

Jan. 21—1821—Pisa

My dear Claire

I have no adventures to record or story to tell in this letter, but as you may be somewhat curious about our new friends I will tell you the little I have observed about them. Jane<sup>1</sup> is certainly very pretty but she wants animation and sense; her conversation is *nothing particular*, and she speaks in a slow monotonous voice: but she appears good tempered and tolerant. Ned seems the picture of good humor and obligingness, he is lively and possesses great talent in drawing so that with him one is never at a loss for subjects of conversation.— He seems to make all he sees subjects of surprize & pleasure—cannot endure Miss Edgeworth's novels & is the opposite of a prude in every

<sup>5</sup> Not until May 18, 1821, did Claire enter in her journal: "After dinner pack off a stove to Pisa." At this time the Shelleys were already at the Baths of Pisa for the summer.

<sup>1</sup> Jane and Ned Williams.

way (and di piu has a soft harmonious voice infinitely pleasing). Of course they have somewhat helped from our shoulders the burthen of TOM which was beginning to be very heavy. Pacchiani has helped off another piece—M[edwin] has no sympathy with our tastes or conversation—he is infinitely commonplace and is as silent as a firescreen but not half so useful; except that he sometimes mends a pen.

You should hear Williams's account of his friend Captain Bowen who has spent £1100 of prize money in shewing two sisters Italy—a rough English sailor who while the young ladies say—What a charming picture—really that statue if one knew what it meant would be very pretty—stands with one of them hanging on each arm with his thumbs in his pockets whistling & looking another way— When they were at Florence they had several letters of introduction to Italian ladies— But you know, John, said they, we cannot go & visit these ladies without knowing what their characters are!—What, damn it, said he, would you have me go to the husbands & ask what their wives' characters are—but unable to persuade them— Poor devils I could not leave them alone a whole evening so there we went top row to the opera at Leghorn he is was [*sic*] infinitely delighted but his sisters said—There, John, now you have brought us to a place where we dont know a soul.—An old lady asked his advice for her route from Florence to Naples—standing with anxious care tracing her way on the map with her finger—From Narni to Rome—then from Rome to Albano, from Albano to Velletri, from Velletri to Terracina—“There Madam you will to a certainty have your throat cut.”—“Lord, sir, (and the old lady lifted up both her eyes & her tracing finger) you dont say so! but how!”—“The robbers, Madam, the robbers”—“But sir the robbers—they only want ones money—and though its disagreeable to lose ones money I would give them all mine with pleasure rather than—” “Ah you're deceived—you would most assuredly have your throat cut—to be sure they might shoot you”— “Oh pray dont talk about it Captain Bowen, I would not go to Naples on any account to be robbed & have my throat cut half way—”

The old lady came to Williams saying—“To be sure I am much obliged to you, Sir, for having introduced me to Captain Bowen—else I might have gone to Naples and have been robbed and murdered by the way—Bless me! What a very shocking road it must be.

(Jan. 23) I had intended to finish this letter at my ease & to dispatch it with Sgricci on his return to Florence but since Shelley neglected to send the enclosed Bulletin in his letter I write to send it—In the meantime I will fill my paper with what gossip I may.

Pacchiani's *crime* which I thought concealed is I find tolerably well known. I do not scruple *therefore* to confide it to you. You know the many compliments he has received on account of his goodness to Æsop— Well not only does this poor youth serve him for servant, secretary &c &c & is in truth a hardly used slave but P. appropriates for his own use the money Æsop gets

from his scholars, half starving the poor fellow and doling him out *grazia per grazia* when he want[s] to be shaved &c— When P. accompanied you to Florence he took with him 20 crowns of Æsops earnings & when he returned went round and got money from his pupils in advance— Being necessitated to pay a debt yesterday he made Æsop go and get 6.00 in advance from Prince Lodovico although the prince had before advanced two months pay to him. He said to the V[iviani] the other day—*questo Esops e un sciocco, un balordo* how will he ever get on if he goes among the English so shabbily dressed but Pacchiani must do everything—I went to Ghiri & cut off a coat, waistcoat & pantaloons—it cost me 200 lire which I can ill spare *ma bisogna fare bene al prossimo* questo e il mio massimo per questo non son sicco— Emilia was pleased with this small justice of Pacchiani but on enquiry of Æsop she found that his charity had amounted to his having run a bill up for the poor fellow at Ghiris—for he took the clothes & had them put down to Campetti's name. You may easily believe that were it not for Emilia we would never see this rascal again. When we paid him for our *legno* for Lucca—we insisted on paying the whole charge—he refused with much vociferation & magnanimity when—suddenly stopping short he said—Yes I take them for Æsop. So besides thieving from him his honest gains he makes him appear a beggar & to finish the picture treats him with a tyranny and harshness that breake the poor fellow's spirit.

Upon the occasion of Sgricci's second *Accademia*<sup>2</sup> he wished this latter to give him 200 tickets to distribute among the poor sc[h]olars to fill the pit (I have not the smallest portion of a doubt that he intended to sell them at a paul or ½ a paul a piece). S[gricci] refused to *mendicare con i lodi* in consequence this excellent friend did not attend his *accademia* yesterday night— We went as you may suppose & after much deliberation & consultation we agreed that the best way would be to give a sum at the door as is the custom for the friends of the actor or Poet to do— Accordingly we left 10 sequins—a small sum but as you know as much as we could afford— Hardly had we entered our box—keeping ourselves for a while in the obscurest part of it than we heard it announced in the pit *des Inglesi hanno last lasciarti dieci zechini all'uscio*—the words were repeated again & again— I sat in the greatest fear I ever felt you could not have watched and doubted more the shaking parts of our carriage windows than I feared (not then knowing that P. was not in the house) that he or others would find us out & that the *scolari* ever in search of amusement and most riotous in carnival time should treat us with some of their sonorous approbation.—But our Black Genius not being there the sound of the *zechini* died away from the voice of man & we heard no more.

The subject of the Tragedy was the Death of Hector. S[gricci] was in excellent *inspiration*, his poetry was brilliant flowing & divine—a hymn to Mars & another to Victory were wonderfully spirited & striking—Achilles foretold to Hector that he (Achilles) was the master spirit who would destroy & van-

<sup>2</sup> See Letters 101 and 107.

quish him— Victory, he said, sits on the pummel of my sword & the way is short from thence to the point. The madness of Cassandra was exquisitely delineated—and her prophecies wondrous & torrent like—they burst on the ear like the Cry Trojans cry of Shakespear and music eloquence & poetry were combined in this wonderful effort of the imagination—or rather shall I say of the inspiration of some wondrous deity.

(24) I was interrupted last night in my letter by the entrance of Prince Mauro<sup>3</sup>—on the day before the Williams and Medwin (the latter to our infinite joy & good fortune for he threatened us with his *seca presenza* at the theatre) went to Livorno & yesterday S[helley] went to join them so I was alone. Prince Mauro is a man much to my taste gentlemanly—gay learned and full of talent & enthusiasm for Greece—he gave me a Greek lesson and staid until 8 o'clock—about half an hour after Sgricci came & we had at a *tête à tête* for two hours until Shelleys return. I was extremely pleased with him he talked with delight of the inspiration he had experienced the night before, which bore him out of himself and filled him as they describe the Pythiness to have been filled with divine & tumu[1]tuous emotion—especially in the part where Cassandra prophesies he was as overcome as she could [be] & he poured forth prophecy as if Apollo had also touched his lips with the oracular touch. We talked about many things as you may guess in that time—with a frankness & gentleness beyond what I have before seen in him & which was the best and a conclusive answer to what has been said of his irregular life.

One word more of our Black Genius— A rich Englishman here—a natural philosopher bought at Leghorn a box of Elba minerals—worth at the very most 20 crowns— Pacchiani joined with the seller & together they made this poor fellow pay £70— This is well known all over Leghorn—where Pacchiani exults & revels with this wellgot cash.

Emilia is at present in much better spirits than I have seen her for a long time— Pacchiani brings her many visitors— She says she does not like this but at least it makes pass the time & gives her something else to think of than the dreary cells & high walls of her convent.

Adieu— I will write to you soon again— Sgricci conveys this to you. I am sorry that he is going—yet in some sort glad for Florence is better suited to him than Pisa— He talks of giving an Acedemia there in the Quaresima.

Ever yours,

M.

ADDRESS: Miss Clairmont. ORIGINAL: A. Edward Newton, Daylesford, Penn., in 1937; A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to. Across page 4 Shelley wrote two lines in Italian. PRINTED: (Extracts only) Dowden, II, 363, 366, 367–68, 387 (quots., 3, 1, 24, & 13 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>3</sup> Prince Alexander Mavrocordato.

111. *To Maria Gisborne*

Casa Galetti, Pisa [c. February 12, 1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

I send you the books, which I have been some time in collecting; but I hope you were not in *furia*. I send you a packet of newspapers; be so kind as to return them as soon as you have done with them.

Shelley is tolerably well. The sunshine, however cold the air may be, agrees with me. I hope Mr. Gisborne is now quite recovered. Do you not envy my luck, that, having begun Greek, an amiable, young, agreeable, and learned Greek Prince<sup>1</sup> comes every morning to give me a lesson of an hour and a-half? This is the result of an acquaintance with Pacchiani. So you see, even the Devil has his use. Pacchiani himself has now been a fortnight at Florence; I dread his return.<sup>2</sup>

No news from or of Naples.

I wish you could find a letter from my Father in the Leghorn Post-office, for I have surely lost one.

I hope you are well. Addio.

Ever yours,  
Mary W.S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 582–83, Dowden, II, 363 (quot., 4 lines); Marshall, I, 273 (quot., 5 lines). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

112. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Casa Galetti, Pisa,  
Feb. 21, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Shelley will take the opportunity of a letter he intends to write to Ollier in a few days to bid him fulfil Mr. G[isborne]'s request concerning the books for his sister.

Would you have the kindness to pay a debt or two that we have at Leghorn —& when you tell me the amount I will forward the sum to you immediately by Pepi—there are twenty livres to Terazzi—some such sum to Prinoth (where I bought my work box) and a bill to our old shoemaker—he whom you recommended to me—be so kind (having paid it) to forward me the bill of the latter for part of the account, how much I know not is Mrs. Masons. This man deserves an excessive scolding— When at Leghorn last summer I ordered 6 pr. of walking shoes & he has made them of such vile leather that I can only wear them a few times— I shall have no more from him—

Be so kind as to send the Sophocles by Pepi & Zenophon's *Anabases* if you can find it among our books. I hope this fine weather does you all good— I

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 107, note 3.

<sup>2</sup> The following entry in Mary's journal fixes the date of the letter: "*Monday, Jan. 29, [1821]. —Pacchiani goes to Florence.*"—*Shelley and Mary*, III, 580.

work hard at Greek & sh[oul]d get on were it not for the intolerable grammar— We are promised soon several boxes from England—containing (one of them) Papa's answer to Malthus<sup>1</sup> which perhaps you are curious to see—

I have had a letter from him<sup>2</sup> which contains the agreeable news that William [Godwin's son by his second wife] has obtained without any advance of money a seat in the house of Nash the Kings Architect whom of course, Henry will well remember. Adieu—

Yours Ever

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] I find that Prinoth has been paid—so Terrazi & the shoemaker are our only creditors.— W[oul]d you ask the former if he has any, & the price of some very fine cambric pocket handkerchiefs taking a dozen of them—

ADDRESS: Alla Signora/ La Signora Maria Gisborne/ Casa Ricci/ All'Origine/ Fuore della Porta Pisa/ Livorno. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 466–67); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 584–85; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 362–63. TEXT: From original letter.

### 113. To Maria Gisborne

[Pisa] March 1, 1821

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

Forgive my delay about the money; the handkerchiefs must be bargained for, they are too dear. We received yesterday a letter from Henry, most interesting and well written; he begs us to tell you that he and his red neckcloth have escaped safe and sound from the buffaloes, and are well lodged at Elba.

I hope you are all quite well.

Yours, &c.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: (Limited publication) *Shelley and Mary*, III, 589–90. TEXT: From *ibid.*

### 114. To Maria Gisborne

Casa Aulla, Pisa [c. March 21, 1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

I send you a few papers, which you will be so kind as to return when done with. What think you of that unfortunate lady, Charlotte Harley? Mr. Ashton was married, and the very morning after his death (he poisoned himself) the news of his wife's death arrived. He was neither an amiable nor good man.

I wish you would get me from Arbib's a scarf of China crape; I want it a light, pretty colour—lilac or blue, but not pink. I believe they ask the English six monete for them, but I should think you can get it for four, or for thirty livres. You would much oblige me by sending it as soon as you conveniently can. We are all well.

<sup>1</sup> Godwin's *Answer to Malthus*, published in 1820.

<sup>2</sup> Dated January 30, 1821, and printed in *Shelley and Mary*, III, 580 A–C.

I have finished the two "Ædipi" with my Greek [Mavrocordato] and am now half way through the "Antigone." He is also my pupil in English, though not very regular. He is exceedingly clever, as you will judge when I tell you that he has learned English only four months; he can read any prose, poetry with very little help, and writes it very tolerably, and indeed he could do all this two months ago. How does your pupil and master go on?

We understand that two parcels have been shipped for us; one by Peacock, directed to you. We do not know either the name of the ship or the captain, but have written to learn. The other by Papa, the "Amy," Captain Bloomfield.

Shall we have the pleasure of seeing you before we retreat to the mountains for our summer quarters? Is Henry returned safe and sound? Adieu.

Ever truly yours,

Mary W. S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 596-97; Dowden, II, 363 (quot., 7 lines). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 115. *Shelley to Thomas Love Peacock*

Pisa,

March 21, 1821.

[P.S. by Mary] Also, if you will be so kind, 4 skeins of white netting silk—2 green and 2 crimson—all of a size fit for purses. You will send them to Ollier with the seals, etc., if his parcel is not yet dispatched—if it is have the goodness to send them as soon as you can by some other opportunity.

Am I not lucky to have got so good a master? I have finished the two of "Ædipi," and very soon the "Antigone," the name of the prince is Ἀλέξανδρος Μανροκόρδατος. He can read English perfectly well.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 250. TEXT: From *ibid.*

### 116. *To Claire Clairmont*

[Pisa, April 2, 1821.]

ὑψιλαντι Υψιλαντι

My dear Clare,

Greece has declared its freedom! Prince Mavrocordato has made us expect this event for some weeks past. Yesterday, he came *rayonnant de joie*—he had been ill for some days, but he forgot all his pains. Ipselanti, a Greek general in the service of Russia, has collected together 10,000 Greeks and entered Wallachia, declaring the liberty of his country. The Morea—Epirus—Servia are in revolt. Greece will most certainly be free. The worst part of this news to us is that our amiable prince will leave us—he will of course join his countrymen as soon as possible—never did man appear so happy—yet he sacrifices family—fortune—everything to the hope of freeing his country. Such men are repaid—such succeed. You may conceive the deep sympathy that we feel with his joy on this occasion: tinged as it must be with anxiety for success—

made serious by the knowledge of the blood that must be shed on this occasion. What a delight it will be to visit Greece free.

April has opened with weather truly heavenly—after a whole week of libeccio—rain and wind, it is delightful to enjoy one of these days peculiar to Italy in this early season—the clear sky, animating sun and fresh yet not cold breeze—just that delicious season when pleasant thoughts bring sad ones to the mind; when every sensation seems to make a double effect, and every moment of the day is divided, felt and counted. One is not gay—at least I am not—but peaceful and at peace with all the world.

I write you a short letter today but I could not resist the temptation of acquainting you with the changes in Greece, the moment Prince Mavrocordato gave us leave to mention it.

I hope that your spirits will get better with this favourable change of weather—Florence must be perfectly delightful. Send the white paint as soon as you can, and two *striscie's* for me. Shelley says that he will finish this letter. We hear from no one in England.

Ever yours,

M. W. S.

[Shelley adds a two-page letter]

ADDRESS: Miss Clairmont,/ Presso al Prof. Bojti/ Dirimpetto Palazzo Pitti,/ Firenze. ORIGINAL: Carl H. Pforzheimer, New York; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to (first 1½ pp. by Mary, remainder by Shelley, signed "S"). PRINTED: Dowden, II, 394–95; *Letters from P. B. Shelley to Jane Clairmont*, edited by Wise, 47–49; Julian edition, X, 250–51. TEXT: From Julian edition.

### 117. To Maria Gisborne\*

[Pisa] Thursday 5 April [1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

I ought to have answered your letter before but I waited until I could send you a few papers. I have now other news to communicate to you which must needs interest you greatly— This is no less than that Greece has declared its Liberty—has declared the war of the cross against the Crescent. Alexander Ipsilanti—a Greek General in the Russian service and an Aide-de-camp of the Emperor Alexander has advanced as far as Bucharest with 10,000 Greeks collected from the Russian service, has issued an eloquent & Beautiful Cry of War to his countrymen & is hastening to join the Sulliot, Servians, Epirotes & the people of the Morea who have all revolted— My Master, the Prince Mavrocordato, is hastening to join the army—while the Greeks of rank here, Prince Caraja, the former Ospadaro of Wallachia & his daughter the Princess Argiropoli & her husband are about to sell their worldly goods here & to return to their country— It is believed that the Russians will help the Greeks being bribed thereto by the gift of the provinces of Moldavia & Wallachia. Did you ever hope that Greece would ever free itself in your day?— They do not intend to attempt Constantinople unless the Turks should think of a massacre & then they hope to be prepared for them.



I am sorry you did not so arrange you[r] affairs as to be able to pay us a visit here— It is now a very long time since I have had the pleasure of seeing you nor can I guess how much more time you will allow to elapse before you visit us.

Shelley would answer Henry's letter if he knew whether he were returned — And will you request him to have the kindness to look to the two saddles of ours that are at your house & to get them cleaned for us & put in order—as Shelley thinks of going over to Leghorn in a few days & he wants to bring them back with him.

Have you any news abroad in your part of the world— There has been a report current that our King was dead which arose from a Miss Campbell sending a note to a Miss Wilson with this intelligence on the first of April & she had the pleasure of making some dozens of April fools.

Adieu kind remembrances to Mr. G. & Henry I hope the latter<sup>1</sup> will get better as the season advances— Do you return to England this Spring—

What news of our boxes we wait anxiously for intelligence concerning them—

Ever yours  
M W S.

[P.S.] Hunt has been very ill of a kind of nervous fever— We had a letter from him yesterday<sup>2</sup>—he is better though still far from well. Keats they say is dying at Rome—

ADDRESS MRS. GISBORNE. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.463, 465); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 602–604; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 363–64. TEXT: From original letter.

## 118. To Maria Gisborne

Casa Aulla, Pisa [c. April 17, 1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

You see the fine weather is come, doubly fine if it bring friendship with it. So we may expect you.

I have only time to say this word, and to inquire concerning the convalescence of the boat; when it is quite well let us know, since Shelley wishes to convey the delicate young lady here himself.<sup>3</sup>

Ever yours.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 617; Dowden, II, 402n (quot., 2 lines). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

<sup>1</sup> Evidently an error for "the former," because it was Mr. Gisborne who was not well.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt's letter of March 1, 1821 (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 161–63). Of Keats, Hunt wrote: "Poor Keats! have you yet heard of him? They send word from Rome that he is dying; and he is so fearfully sensitive he cannot even bear to receive news from England: but I hope to the last." Keats died on February 23, 1821, at Rome.

<sup>3</sup> At Leghorn Henry Reveley had bought for Shelley a ten-foot, flat-bottomed boat, which he fitted with a mast. On the evening of April 16, Shelley, Williams, and Reveley were sailing the boat along the canal from Leghorn to Pisa when Williams upset it and spilled them into

119. *To Leigh Hunt*

Pisa,  
April 17, 1821.

We have been much shocked to learn of Keats' death—and sorry that it was in no way permitted us to be of any use to him since his arrival in Italy.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. A.L. signed "Marina", on last 2 pp. of a sheet of paper folded to 4to size. First 2½ pp. bear the transcript of an Italian article "Duello formale di due de' Fiorentini." Addressed. Torn where sealed; soiled; some defects at the folds; partly repaired. Sold on April 24–25, 1935 (Various Collections), by the American Art Ass'n (279), for \$50, to Samuel (buyer's name unknown). UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Quotation from auction sale catalogue.

120. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Casa Aulla [Pisa]  
19th April [1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Shelley has brought home the Good news that you intend to visit us early next week. I am very glad to hear this; since it is now I fancy about six months since I last saw you. We have plenty of room for you; so I hope that you do not intend to pay us one of your little *skinny* visits—but one of regular length breadth & thickness. Will you not?

Let me remind Henry of my saddle. I believe that Williams told him about the new saddle tree & all else that it required.

Henry will have told you perhaps that poor Keats is dead—at Rome. I fancy that we shall pass this summer at the Baths of Pisa.

Expecting soon to see you I write no more at present— I hope that your eyes are well—and that Mr. Gisborne does not any longer suffer from his rheumatism.

Ever most sinc[ere]ly yours  
Mary W S.

ADDRESS: Alla Ornatissima Signora/ La Signora Maria Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2) 20 APRILE. ENDORSED: Recd. 22nd April 1821. Ans. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 422–23); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. (Follows Shelley's letter to Henry Reveley; Mary's part being on pp. 2–3.) PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 616–17; Dowden, II, 410n (quot., 1 line); Julian edition, X, 257–58. TEXT: From original letter.

121. *To Claire Clairmont*

[Bagni di Pisa, May 11, 1821]<sup>1</sup>

My dear Claire

Shelley and I have been consulting seriously about your letter received this morning, and I wish in as orderly a manner as possible to give you the result

the water. Shelley and Williams walked to Pisa, and Reveley took the boat back to Leghorn for repairs and alterations. See Dowden, II, 399; and Shelley's letter of April 17, 1821, to Reveley, Julian edition, X, 256. The Gisbornes finally arrived in Pisa on Thursday, April 26.

<sup>1</sup> Dowden and Wise are quite wrong in dating this letter 1822; Ingpen comes nearer with "Spring 1821." That [May 11] is correct is, I think, demonstrable. It is quite clear that this is the first letter written from the Baths of Pisa, to which the Shelleys removed on May 8. This would

of our reflections. First as to my coming to Florence; I mentioned it to you first, it is true, but we have so little money, and our calls this quarter for removing &c will be so great that we had entirely given up the idea. If it would be of great utility to you, as a single expence we might do it—but if it be necessary that others sh[oul]d follow, the crowns w[oul]d be minus. But before I proceed further on this part of the subject let me examine what your plans appear to be. Your anxiety for A[llegra]'s health is to a great degree unfounded; Venice, its stinking canals & dirty streets, is enough to kill any child; but you ought to know, & any one will tell you so, that the towns of Romagna situated where Bagnacavallo is, enjoy the best air in Italy— Imola & the neighbouring *paese* are famous. Bagnaca[va]llo especially, being 15 miles from the sea & situated on an eminence is peculiarly salutary. Considering the affair reasonably A[llegra] is well taken care of there, she is in good health, & in all probability will continue so.

No one can more entirely agree with you than I in thinking that as soon as possible A[llegra] ought to be taken out of the hands of one as remorseless as he is unprincipled. But at the same time it appears to me that the present moment is exactly the one in which this is the most difficult—time cannot add to these difficulties for they can never be greater. Allow me to enumerate some of those which are peculiar to the present instant. A[llegra] is in a convent, where it is next to impossible to get her out; high walls & bolted doors enclose her—& more than all the regular habits of a convent, which never permits her to get outside its gates & would cause her to be missed directly. But you may have a plan for this and I pass to other objections. At your desire Shelley urged her removal to L[ord] B[yron] and this appears in the highest degree to have exasperated him—he vowed that if you annoyed him he would place A[llegra] in some secret convent, he declared that you sh[oul]d have nothing to do with her & that he w[oul]d move heaven & earth to prevent your interference. L[ord] B[yron] is at present a man of 12 or 15 thousand a year, he is on the spot, a man reckless of the ill he does others, obstinate to desperation in the pursuance of his plans or his revenge. What then would you do having A[llegra] on the outside of the convent walls? W[oul]d you go to America? the money we have not, nor does this seem to be your idea. You probably wish to secret yourself. But L[ord] B[yron] would use any means to find you out—& the story he might make up—a man stared at by the Grand Duke—with money at command—& above all on the spot to put energy into every pursuit, w[oul]d he not find you? If he did not he comes upon Shelley—he taxes him; Shelley

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therefore be the letter which Claire, according to her diary, received on May 12. Her diary also shows that she wrote Mary on May 10. Mary, as she states in the letter, answered Claire's letter on the day she received it, which would be May 11. Claire's diary shows that during May she was in constant communication with Mary, Shelley, Mrs. Mason, and Emilia. She received letters from Shelley or Mary or both on May 15, 19, 22, 26, 29, and 31. Her diary references to very low spirits on May 9 and 12 also fit her condition as indicated by Mary's letter of the eleventh. She was, of course, agitated about Allegra. She did not go to Pisa until June 19.

must either own it or tell a lie in either case he is open to be called upon by L[ord] B[yron] to answer for his conduct—and a duel—I need not enter upon that topic, your own imagination may fill up the picture.

On the contrary a little time, a very little time, may alter much of this. It is more than probable that he will be obliged to go to England within a year—then at a distance he is no longer so formidable— What is certain is that we shall not be so near him another year— He may be reconciled with his wife, & though he may bluster he may not be sorry to get A[llegra] off his hands; at any rate if we leave him perfectly quiet he will not be so exasperated, so much on the *qui vive* as he is at present— Nothing remains constant, something may happen—things cannot be worse. Another thing I mention which though sufficiently ridiculous may have some weight with you. Spring is our unlucky season. No spring has passed for us without some piece of ill luck. Remember the first spring [1815] at Mrs. Harbottles.<sup>2</sup> The second when you became acquainted with L[ord] B[yron] the Third we went to Marlow—no wise thing at least The fourth our uncomfortable residence in London— The fifth our Roman misery— the sixth Paolo at Pisa—the seventh a mixture of Emilia & a Chancery suit— Now the aspect of the Autumnal Heavens has on the contrary been with few exceptions, favourable to us— What think you of this? It is in your own style, but it has often struck me. W[oul]d it not be better therefore to wait, & to undertake no plan until circumstance[s] bend a little more to us.

Then we are dreadfully behind hand with money at present Hunt & our furniture has swallowed up more than our savings. You say great sacrifices will be required of us. I would make many to extricate all belonging to me from the hands of L[ord] B[yron], whose hypocrisy & cruelty rouse one's soul from its depths. We are of course still in great uncertainty as to our summer residence—we have calculated the great expence of removing our furniture for a few months as far as Spezia, & it appears to us a bad plan—to get a furnished house we must go nearer Genoa, probably nearer L[ord] B[yron] which is contrary to our most earnest wishes. We have thought of Naples [*the remainder of the letter is in Shelley's hand*] in such an event— Your setting up a school, precisely on Miss Field's plan, I certainly never approved, because I thought even in Miss Fields case, the prices & the whole plan ridiculously narrow: & the whole affair seemed planned on that plausible scheme of moderation which never succeeds. It was this that I wanted to say to you. But the idea of a School, especially under Mrs. Masson's protection, I confess appeared very plausible to me. I should be glad, in case of *transmigration* to leave you under such powerful & such secure protection as her's: it would be one subject less for regret, to me, if I could consider—my death—as no irremediable misfortune to you; as in this case it would not.—The incumbent of my reversion still flourishes; & you must be aware that the sensations with which it has pleased

<sup>2</sup> "The death of Mary's first babe in 1815."—Julian edition, X, 262.

the Devil to endow the frame of his successor, are not the strongest pledges of longevity.—You say that I may not have a conversation with you because you may depart in a hurry Heaven knows where—except it be to the other world (& I know the coachman of that road will not let the passengers wait a minute) I know of no mortal business that requires such post haste.

We are now at the Baths in a very nice house looking to the mountains. Mary will tell you all about it. Little Babe is quite well, smiling & good. I am better today. I have been very ill, body & soul, but principally the latter.—I took some exercise in the boat to dissipate thought: but it overfatigued me & made me worse. The Baths, I think, do me good, but especially solitude, & not seeing polite human faces, & hearing voices. I go over about twice a week to see Emilia, who is in better spirits & health than she has been for some time—Danielli<sup>3</sup> almost frightened her to death, and she handed him over to me to quiet & console.—It seems that I am worthy of taking my degree of M. A. in the art of Love, for I have contrived to calm the despairing Swain, much to the satisfaction of poor Emilia: who in that Convent of hers sees everything as through a mist, ten times its natural size.—The Williams's come sometimes: they have taken Pugnano. W[illiams] I like & I have got reconciled to Jane.—Mr. Taaffe rides, writes, invites, complains, bows & apologizes; he would be a mortal bore if he came often. The Greek Prince<sup>4</sup> comes sometimes, & I reproach my own savage disposition that so agreeable accomplished and ammi-able [a] person is not more agreeable to me.— Adieu, my dear Claire

Ever yours most affectionately

S.

ADDRESS: A Mademoiselle/ Madlle de Clairmont/ Chez M. le Professeur Bojti/  
Florence. POSTMARK: PISA. ORIGINAL: Stark Collection, University of Texas;  
A.L. (signature cut out), 7 pp. 4to. (pp. 1–4 in Mary's handwriting, the re-  
mainder in Shelley's). PRINTED: Dowden, II, 488–90 (dated 1822); *Letters*  
*from P. B. Shelley to Jane Clairmont*, edited by Wise, 72–81; Julian edition,  
X, 260–64. TEXT: From original letter.

## 122. *To Miss Amelia Curran\**

Pisa,  
14 May, 1821.

My dear Miss Curran

I am very glad to believe, since your letter contains nothing to the contrary, that you have recovered from your illness of last year— You do not talk of going to England nor do you mention painting— I wish you would let me hear som[e]thing of both these things—

Here we are for the present;<sup>1</sup> and it would be a great addition to this town if it could boast you among its inhabitants—and we you among our visitors—

<sup>3</sup> One of Emilia's lovers, who, according to Claire, were not few in number.

<sup>4</sup> On June 8 Shelley wrote to Claire: "A vessel has arrived to take the Greek Prince [Mavro-cordato] and his suite to join the army in Morea. He is a great loss to Mary and *therefore* to me . . . but not otherwise."—Julian edition, X, 273.

<sup>1</sup> Though the letter is dated Pisa, the Shelleys had moved to the Baths of Pisa on May 8.

Do you seriously think of coming?<sup>2</sup>— Our affairs, like all human affairs, and ours most particularly, are very uncertain.— A friend has tried to persuade us to make a trip to Como during the summer months—the distance & northern direction of this town has made us hesitate— However we count entirely on a visit to Rome during the ensuing winter<sup>3</sup>—If therefore our unsettled state does not permit us, as we so much desire, to say, come to us, this summer at least we shall have the pleasure of enjoying much of your society during the winter months at your divine City.

Shelley is somewhat but not much better than when you saw him—he goes on much in the same way— I and Claire are well and my little Percy flourishing.

I am delighted when I think that I shall visit Rome next winter—if we do come, and you are still there, I dare say that you would have the kindness to secure lodgings for us before hand—as the saving of such an expence to us would more surely ensure our journey.

Pray let me hear from you soon again And believe me ever

Most sincer[e]ly yours,

Mary W Shelley.

[P.S.] Shelley desires his very kindest remembrances.

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.468); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to.

PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 624; *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 364–65. TEXT: From original letter.

## 123. To Maria Gisborne

Baths of San Giuliano,

May 28, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

We have heard that the “Amy” is arrived, and as it contains a most interesting box for us, let me entreat you to send it (the parcel, not the “Amy”), directed to Casa Silva,<sup>4</sup> as quickly as you can. Mrs. Mason says that she cannot afford more than 120 sequins for the piano. She has your catalogues,<sup>5</sup> and I fancy will buy some of your music. We have a wish for your maps, if you will be so kind as to tell us what they are. If also you wish to *débarasser* yourself of some of your linen, I would like to have two table-cloths, a dozen table napkins, and half a dozen towels—as I must buy them new else—these things are so cheap in England that it might lighten your luggage, and do you no harm. When shall we see you again? I pity your trouble and fatigue most extremely, and how sincerely do I pray that England may repay your toils.

The Greeks are getting on finely, except that the Patriarch and four Bishops,

<sup>2</sup> On June 8 Shelley wrote to Claire: “Miss Curran wrote the other day inviting herself to spend the summer with us, but Mary sent an excuse.”—Julian edition, X, 272.

<sup>3</sup> In his letter postmarked June 22, Shelley wrote to Claire: “I think of spending next winter in Florence. Mary talks of Rome.”—Julian edition, X, 279.

<sup>4</sup> The home of Mr. and Mrs. Mason.

<sup>5</sup> Lists of articles which the Gisbornes wished to sell before returning to England.

and some Princes, have been decapitated in Constantinople; but, in Greece, they conquer and cut to pieces the forces sent against them; and their fleet of 120 sail is expected to hinder the debarkation of Turkish troops, since the Turkish fleet, almost entirely manned by Greeks, is now nearly useless through desertion.

I have not heard from Papa this age. Pray inquire if there are letters for us at the Leghorn Post-office.

Shelley desires his best remembrances. Percy is quite well. Shelley, after the interval of a few days, is again horribly tormented by a pain in his side. If you would come, I would read you the first volume of my book.<sup>6</sup> Adieu, my dear Friend.

Ever yours,  
M. W. S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: (Limited publication) *Shelley and Mary*, III, 630–31. TEXT: From *ibid.*

## 124. To John Taaffe<sup>1</sup>

Baths St. Giuliano,  
Tuesday Evening [June 5, 1821]

My dear Sir

I send my servant for the Guinea Pigs, and am extremely obliged to you for the book.

The Williams' are very well and desire regards if I should see you; but I am afraid that this *tempo molto* does not accord with you or your little horse.

Shelley will be very glad to receive the next proof.<sup>2</sup>

Your obedient servant  
Mary Shelley.

[P.S.] I send you some lists of articles that some friends of ours going to England wish to sell.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps you will have the kindness to shew them to any of your friends. Madme Requy might like to buy some of the music for Ida. Those marked with a cross are already sold.

ADDRESS: John Taaffe Esq/ Casa Mostardi,/ Pisa. ORIGINAL: Stark Collection, University of Texas; A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo, with seal. PRINTED: Julian edition, X, 269. TEXT: From *ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> *Valperga: or Castruccio, Prince of Lucca*, published in 1823 (see Letter 126, note 4).

<sup>1</sup> John Taaffe (possibly Count Taaffe) was an Irishman who came into the Shelley circle about the same time as Pacchiani, Emilia Viviani, Sgricci, and others in November–December, 1820. He is first mentioned in Mary's journal on December 3. Taaffe considered himself a poet, but was ridiculed by Shelley, Mary, and Byron. Shelley evidently thought well of his *Comment on Dante* if not of his translation of *The Divine Comedy*, for in his letter of June 16, 1821, to Ollier he recommends it very highly to Ollier for publication. But Ollier was not persuaded; Murray published the first volume of the *Comment*. This work was printed in Pisa with the types of Didot, and Shelley read the proofs. See Julian edition, X, 260n, for other details.

<sup>2</sup> Of Taaffe's *Comment on Dante*.

<sup>3</sup> The Gisbornes.

125. *To Maria Gisborne*

Baths of S. Giuliano,  
June 8, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

Have the kindness to give Shelley's pistol-case to the bearer of this note. If the box be not supplied with the articles that it wanted, nevertheless send it as it is, for we must absolutely have it by Sunday, without any fail, in whatever state it may be. How do you get on? Our box has been found on board the "Amy." We long to hear from you.

Ever yours,  
M. W. Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: (Limited publication) *Shelley and Mary*, III, 634. TEXT: From *ibid.*

126. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Baths of S. Giuliano,  
June 30th, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Well how do you get on? Mr. Gisborne says nothing of that in the note which he wrote yesterday, and it is that in which I am most interested. I pity you exceedingly in all the disagreeable details to which you are obliged to sacrifice your time & attention— I can conceive no employment more tedious; but now I hope it is nearly over, and that as the fruit of its conclusion you will soon come to see us.

Shelley is far from well—he suffers from his side & nervous irritation. The day on which he returned from Leghorn he found little Percy ill of a fever produced by teething—he got well the next day—but it was so strong while it lasted that it frightened us greatly. You know how much reason we have to fear the deceitful appearances of perfect health—

You see that this your last summer in Italy is manufactured on purpose to accustom you to the English seasons— It is warmer now, but we still enjoy the delight of cloudy skies— The cicala has not yet made himself heard—

I get on with my occupation & hope to finish the rough transcript this month<sup>4</sup>— I shall then give about a month to corrections & then I shall transcribe it— It has indeed been a child of mighty slow growth, since I first thought of it in our library at Marlow. I then wanted the body in which I might embody my spirit— The materials for this I found at Naples—but I wanted other books—nor did I begin it until a year afterwards at Pisa—it was again suspended during our stay at your house & continued again at the Baths— All the winter I did not touch it—but now it is in a state of great forwardness since I am at page 71 of the 3rd vol. It has indeed been a work of some

<sup>4</sup> Of *Valperga: or Castruccio, Prince of Lucca*, Mary's second novel, published in three volumes in 1823, by G. and W. B. Whittaker, London.



labour since I have read & consulted a great many books— I shall be very glad to read the first vol. to you that you may give me your opinion as to the conduct and interest of the story.

June is now at its last gasp— You talked of going in August— I hope therefore that we may soon expect you.

Have you heard anything concerning the inhabitants of Skinner St.<sup>5</sup> It is now many months since I received a letter—& I begin to grow alarmed. Adieu.

Ever sincerely yours

Mary W S.

[P.S. *in Shelley's hand*] I have got an offer of 5 crowns for the microscope.—You may accept it, if you cannot get a better.

ADDRESS: Alla Signora Maria Gisborne/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2) 1 LUGLIO. ENDORSED: Recd. 1st July, 1821. ANSD. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.469–70); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 158n (partly summarized, quot., ½ line); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 647–49; Dowden, II, 413n (quot., 2 lines); Marshall, I, 290–91. TEXT: From original letter.

## 127. To Shelley\*<sup>1</sup>

[Pisa] Friday [August 10, 1821]

My dear Shelley

Shocked beyond all measure as I was I instantly wrote the enclosed—if the task be not too dreadful pray copy it for me I cannot—

Send<sup>2</sup> that part of your letter which contains the accusation— I tried but I could not write it— I think I could as soon have died— I send also Elise's last letter<sup>3</sup>—enclose it or not as you think best.

I wrote to you with far different feelings last night—beloved friend—our bark is indeed tempest tost but love me as you have ever done & God preserve my child to me and our enemies shall not be too much for us.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The Godwins.

<sup>1</sup> On August 2 Shelley received from Byron a letter urging him to come at once to Ravenna, from which place Byron intended to move. Concerned about Allegra, Shelley set out on August 3, spent the fourth in Leghorn with Claire, and went on to Ravenna, arriving there at 10 o'clock at night on August 7. Before morning Byron had told Shelley the monstrous tale about him and Claire in Naples which Elise had related to Mr. and Mrs. Hoppner, and which Mr. Hoppner had retailed to Byron in a letter dated September 16, 1820 (printed in John Murray [ed.], *Lord Byron's Correspondence* [London, John Murray, 1922, 2 vols.], II, 179–83). Shelley wrote Mary immediately and asked her to write Mrs. Hoppner. Mary did write (see Letter 128), enclosing the letter in this one to Shelley, with the request that Shelley copy her letter, which, wisely enough, Shelley did *not* do. Instead of sending Mary's letter directly to the Hoppners, Shelley gave it to Byron, who wished to forward it with a letter from himself. Since the letter was found among Byron's own papers after his death, it has been a much debated question whether he did or did not send it. However that may be, the Shelleys never heard from the Hoppners, and when Mary met Mrs. Hoppner in Italy many years later, she "cut" her—doubtless with pleasure. See Dowden, II, 420–29.

<sup>2</sup> Printed "Read" in Dowden, Marshall, and *Shelley and Mary*.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 128, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> In her journal for Saturday, August 4, Mary had written: "Shelley's birthday. Seven years are now gone; what changes! What a life! We now appear tranquil; yet who knows what wind—but I will not prognosticate evil; we have had enough of it."—Dowden, II, 420.

Consider well if Florence be a fit residence for us— I love I own to face danger—but I would not be imprudent<sup>5</sup>—

Pray get my letter to Mrs. H[oppner] copied for a thousand reasons

Adieu dearest take care of yourself all yet is well—the shock for me is over and I now despise the slander—but it must not pass uncontra[di]cted—I sincerely thank Lord Byron for his kind unbelief

Affectionately yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] Do not think me imprudent in mentioning Clares<sup>6</sup> illness at Naples — It is well to meet facts—they are as cunning as wicked— I have read over my letter it is written in haste—but it were as well that the first burst of feeling sh[oul]d be expressed— No letters—

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1 f.471); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED *Shelley Memorials*, 162–63; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 662–63; Dowden, II, 424–25; Marshall, I, 297–98. TEXT: From original letter.

## 128. To Mrs. R. B. Hoppner<sup>1</sup>

Pisa,

August 10, 1821.

My dear Mrs. Hoppner—

After a silence of nearly two years I address you again, and most bitterly do I regret the occasion on which I now write. Pardon me that I do not write in French; you understand English well, and I am too much impressed to shackle myself in a foreign language; even in my own my thoughts far out-run my pen, so that I can hardly form the letters. I write to defend him to whom I have the happiness to be united, whom I love and esteem beyond all creatures, from the foulest calumnies; and to you I write this, who were so kind [and] to Mr. Hoppner, to both, of whom I indulged the pleasing idea that I have every reason to feel gratitude. This is indeed a painful task.

Shelley is at present on a visit to Lord Byron at Ravenna, and I received a letter from him today containing accounts that make my hand tremble so much that I can hardly hold the pen. It tells me that Elise wrote<sup>2</sup> to you relating the most hideous stories against him, and that you have believed them. Before I speak of these falsehoods permit [me] to say a few words concerning this

<sup>5</sup> Mary probably means that, considering the present scandal about you and Claire, it might not be prudent to live in the same town with Claire, who was in Florence.

<sup>6</sup> Marshall (I, 298) prints "E.s", with the footnote: "The initial has been printed C. Mrs. Shelley's letter leaves no doubt that Elise's is the illness referred to." Quite the contrary is true; the word "Clares" is as plain as anything Mrs. Shelley ever wrote. Dowden prints "Claire's"; *Shelley and Mary*, "C's." Mary's journal shows that Claire's illness at Naples occurred on Sunday, December 27, 1818: "Claire is not well."—*Shelley and Mary*, II, 352.

<sup>1</sup> The text of this famous letter is incomplete in *Shelley and Mary*, Dowden, and Marshall. The full and correct text was first printed in *Lord Byron's Correspondence* (II, 185–88), where, however, it is incorrectly dated August 11. It was written on Friday, which was the tenth.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's letter does not state that Elise wrote to the Hoppners. Mr. Hoppner's letter of September 16, 1820, to Byron states explicitly that Elise was in Venice in the summer of 1820 in the service of an English lady, and that she told them this story.

miserable girl. You well know that she formed an attachment with Paolo when we proceeded to Rome, and at Naples their marriage was talked of. We all tried to dissuade her; we knew Paolo to be a rascal, and we thought so well of her that we believed him to be unworthy of her. An accident led me to the knowledge that without marrying they had formed a connexion; she was ill, we sent for a doctor who said there was danger of a miscarriage. I would not turn the girl on the world without in some degree binding her to this man. We had them married at Sir W. A'Court's—she left us; turned Catholic at Rome, married him, and then went to Florence. After the disastrous death of my child we came to Tuscany. We have seen little of them; but we have had knowledge that Paolo has formed a scheme of extorting money from Shelley by false accusations—he has written him threatening letters, saying that he w[oul]d be the ruin of him, &c. We placed these in the hands of a celebrated lawyer here who has done what he can to silence him. Elise has never interfered in this, and indeed the other day I received a letter from her, entreating with great professions of love that I would send her money. I took no notice of this; but although I knew her to be in evil hands, I would not believe that she was wicked enough to join in his plans without proof.

And now I come to her accusations—and I must indeed summon all my courage while I transcribe them; for tears will force their way, and how can it be otherwise? You knew Shelley, you saw his face, and could you believe them? Believe them only on the testimony of a girl whom you despised? I had hopes that such a thing was impossible, and that although strangers might believe the calumnies that this man propagated, none who had ever seen my husband could for a moment credit them.

She says Clare was Shelley's mistress, that—upon my word, I solemnly assure you that I cannot write the words, I send you a part of Shelley's letter that you may see what I am now about to refute—but I had rather die that [*sic*] copy anything so vilely, so wickedly false, so beyond all imagination fiendish.

I am perfectly convinced in my own mind that Shelley never had an improper connexion with Clare—at the time specified in Elise's letter, the winter after we quitted Este, I suppose while she was with us, and that was at Naples, we lived in lodgings where I had momentary entrance into every room, and such a thing could not have passed unknown to me. The malice of the girl is beyond all thought—I now remember that Clare did keep her bed for two days—but I attended on her—I saw the physician—her illness was one that she had been accustomed to for years—and the same remedies were employed as I had before ministered to her in England.

Clare had no child—the rest must be false—but that you should believe it—that my beloved Shelley should stand thus slandered in your minds—he the gentlest and most humane of creatures, is more painful to me, oh far more painful than any words can express.

It is all a lie—Clare is timid; she always showed respect even for me—poor

dear girl! She has some faults—you know them as well as I—but her heart is good, and if ever we quarreled, which was seldom, it was I, and not she, that was harsh, and our instantaneous reconciliations were sincere and affectionate.

Need I say that the union between my husband and myself has ever been undisturbed. Love caused our first imprudence, love which improved by esteem, a perfect trust one in the other, a confidence and affection which, visited as we have been by severe calamities (have we not lost two children?) has increased daily, and knows no bounds.

I will add that Clare has been separated from us for about a year. She lives with a respectable German family at Florence. The reasons of this were obvious—her connexion with us made her manifest as the Miss Clairmont, the mother of Allegra—besides we live much alone—she enters much into society there—and solely occupied with the idea of the welfare of her child, she wished to appear such that she may not be thought in aftertimes to be unworthy of fulfilling the maternal duties. You ought to have paused before you tried to convince the father of her child of such unheard-of atrocities on her part. If his generosity and knowledge of the world had not made him reject the slander with the ridicule it deserved what irretrievable mischief you would have occasioned her!

Those who know me will believe my simple word—it is not long ago that my father said in a letter to me, that he had never known me to utter a falsehood—but you, easy as you have been to credit evil, who may be more deaf to truth—to you I swear—by all that I hold sacred upon heaven and earth by a vow which I should die to write if I affirmed a falsehood—I swear by the life of my child, by my blessed and beloved child, that I know these accusations to be false.

Shelley is as incapable of cruelty as the softest woman. To those who know him his humanity is almost as a proverb. He has been unfortunate as a father, the laws of his country and death has [*sic*] cut him off from his dearest hopes. But his enemies have done him incredible mischief—but that you should believe such a tale coming from such a hand, is beyond all belief, a blow quite unexpected, and the very idea of it beyond words shocking.

But I have said enough to convince you, and are you not convinced? are not my words the words of truth? Repair, I conjure you, the evil you have done by retracting your confidence in one so vile as Elise, and by writing to me that you now reject as false every circumstance of her infamous tale.

You were kind to us, and I shall never forget it; now I require justice; you must believe me, I solemnly entreat you, the justice to confess that you do so.

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] I send this letter to Shelley at Ravenna, that he may see it. For although I ought, the subject is too odious to me to copy it. I wish also that Lord Byron should see it. He gave no credit to the tale, but it is as well that he should see how entirely fabulous it is.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Once among Lady Dorchester's papers, and apparently once owned by John Murray, to whom Lady Dorchester presented her Byron papers; but the present Sir John Murray says it is not in his possession. The Bodleian Library has an imperfect "Copy by Jane, Lady Shelley, from Lady Dorchester's papers" (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 472-75). PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 663-66; Dowden, II, 425-27; Marshall, I, 298-300 (all with omissions); *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 185-88. TEXT: From *Lord Byron's Correspondence*.

129. To Maria Gisborne<sup>1</sup>

Pisa,  
30th November 1821.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne—

Although having much to do be a bad excuse for not writing to you, yet you must in some sort admit this plea on my part. Here we are in Pisa, having furnished very nice apartments for ourselves, and what is more, paid for the furniture out of the fruits of two years' economy. We are at the top of the Tre Palazzi di Chiesa. I dare say you know the house, next door to La Scoto's house on the north side of Lung' Arno; but the rooms we inhabit are south, and look over the whole country towards the sea, so that we are entirely out of the bustle and disagreeable *puzzi*, etc., of the town, and hardly know that we are so enveloped until we descend into the street. The Williams' have been less lucky, though they have followed our example in furnishing their own house, but, renting it of Mr. Webb, they have been treated scurvily. So here we live, Lord Byron just opposite to us in Casa Lanfranchi (the late Signora Felichi's house). So Pisa, you see, has become a little nest of singing birds. You will be both surprised and delighted at the work just about to be published by him; his *Cain*,<sup>2</sup> which is in the highest style of imaginative poetry. It made a great impression upon me, and appears almost a revelation, from its power and beauty. Shelley rides with him; I, of course, see little of him. The lady *whom he serves*<sup>3</sup> is a nice pretty girl without pretensions, good hearted and amiable; her relations were banished Romagna for Carbonarism.

Do you hear anything of Shelley's "Hellas"?<sup>4</sup>— [Ollier] treats us abominably.<sup>5</sup> I should much like to know when he intends to answer Shelley's last letter concerning my affair.<sup>6</sup> I had wished it to come out by Christmas. Now

<sup>1</sup> The Gisbornes had returned to England. The Shelleys left the Baths of Pisa for their new lodgings in Pisa on October 25. Byron arrived in Pisa on November 1, to occupy the house which Shelley had taken for him. The Williamses took a lower flat in the Tre Palazzi di Chiesa.

<sup>2</sup> Published on December 19, 1821.

<sup>3</sup> Countess Teresa Guiccioli, Byron's mistress.

<sup>4</sup> The greater part of *Hellas* (dedicated to Mavrocordato) was written in the first three weeks of October. On the twenty-fifth Williams suggested "Hellas" as a title, and this was immediately adopted by Shelley. During November 6-10 Williams was occupied in making a fair copy for the printer, and the poem was finally published by Ollier in February, 1822.

<sup>5</sup> Shelley was greatly annoyed with Ollier for his failure to publish *Adonais*.

<sup>6</sup> On September 25, 1821, Shelley had written Ollier at length recommending the publication of Mary's *Valperga*. But Ollier did not publish it. In January, 1822, Mary turned over the MS to her father to get published, the profits to be his alone. Godwin made some alterations, and it was finally published in 1823. In her journal Mary had written: "All October is left out, it seems.—We are at the Baths, occupied with furnishing our house [in Pisa], copying my novel, etc."—Marshall, I, 311.

there is no hope. We are warned on all hands not to trust him, and, more to secure his attention than for any other reason, I wish to be sure of the money before he gets the book. I should not be sorry that we break with him, although it would be difficult to bargain with another bookseller at the distance we are. What do you know of Hunt? About two months ago he wrote to say that on the 21st October he should quit England,<sup>7</sup> and we have heard nothing more of him in any way; I expect some day he and six children<sup>8</sup> will drop in from the clouds, trusting that God will temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Pray when you write, tell us everything you know concerning him. Do you get any intelligence of the Greeks? Our worthy countrymen take part against them in every possible way, yet such is the spirit of freedom, and such the hatred of these poor people for their oppressors, that I have the warmest hopes—*πάντις εἰμ' ἐσθλῶν ἀγωνῶν*. Mavrocordato is there, justly revered for the sacrifice he has made of his whole fortune to the cause, and besides for his firmness and talents. If Greece be free, Shelley and I have vowed to go, perhaps to settle there, in one of those beautiful islands where earth, ocean, and sky form the paradise. You will, I hope, tell us all the news of old friends when you write. I see no one that you know. We live in our usual retired way, with few friends and no acquaintances. Clare is returned to her usual residence,<sup>9</sup> and our tranquillity is unbroken in upon, except by those winds, sirocco or tramontana, which now and then will sweep over the ocean of one's mind and disturb or cloud its surface. Since this must be a double letter, I save myself the trouble of copying the enclosed, which was a part of a letter written to you a month ago, but which I did not send. Will you attend to my requests? Every day increases my anxiety concerning the desk. Do you have the goodness to pack it off as soon as you can.

How do you all get on? Have you yet embarked, & what is Henry about? I need not tell you how anxious we are to have these questions answered. I hope that you do not regret your journey to England, & that neither the climate nor its more freezing accompaniments make you regret dear Italy. For this last month we have been enjoying a warm sirocco, which has rendered fires unnecessary; sometimes the days are surpassingly fine, & the burning sun of winter drives us to seek the shade.

Shelley was at your hive<sup>10</sup> yesterday; it is as dirty and busy as ever, so people live in the same narrow circle of space and thought, while time goes on, not

<sup>7</sup> While together in Ravenna in August, Shelley and Byron had decided to invite Hunt to Italy to edit a periodical in which they would all publish their original compositions. Hunt, whose health was bad, gladly accepted. On September 21, 1821, he wrote to Shelley and Mary: "We hope to set off in a month . . . so about the 21st of October we shall all set off, myself, Marianne, and the six children."—*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 172. The ill-fated journal thus projected was *The Liberal*.

<sup>8</sup> Hunt had at least ten children in all. The six born before this date are: Thornton, John, Mary Florinel Leigh, Swinburne, Henry Sylvan, and Percy.

<sup>9</sup> To Professor Bojti's, in Florence. At Empoli, Claire met Byron, who was on his way to Pisa.

<sup>10</sup> Casa Ricci, the Gisbornes' former house in Leghorn. The Gisbornes had begun their return trip to England at Florence on August 1, 1821.

as a racehorse, but a "six-inside dilly," and puts them down softly at their journey's end; while they have slept and ate, and *ecco tutto*. With this piece of morality, dear Mrs. Gisborne, I end. Shelley begs every remembrance of his to be joined with mine to Mr. Gisborne and Henry.

Ever yours,

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] And now, my dear Mrs. Gisborne, I have a great favour to ask of you. Ollier writes to say that he has placed our two desks in the hands of a merchant of the city, and that they are to come—God knows when! Now, as we sent for them two years ago, and are tired of waiting, will you do us the favour to get them out of his hands, and to send them without delay? If they can be sent without being opened, send them *in statu quo*; if they must be opened, do not send the smallest but get a key (being a patent lock the key will cost half a guinea) made for the largest and send it, and return the other to Peacock. If you send the desk, will you send with it the following things?—A few copies of all Shelley's works, particularly of the second edition of the *Cenci*, my mother's posthumous works, and *Letters from Norway*<sup>11</sup> from Peacock, if you can, but do not delay the box for them. Then get money from Ollier to buy a good penknife with several blades, needles in a case, pins, minnikin pins, sealing-wax, scissors, a dozen skeins of white netting silk, not too fine for purses, a tortoise-shell comb for combing out the hair, half-a-dozen ditto such as you gave me, a good spy-glass, set in a gold rim for short sight, one to suit Papa or any person of your acquaintance of the like sight,—No. 10 I think they call it. Ask Peacock if he have anything to suit us; new books we hardly want, since we get them from Lord Byron. Doing this, particularly in sending us the desk, you would do us a real service, for I have long waited in vain for it. You might also send me a dozen pair of stockings for a child of three years old, some of the best vellum drawing paper for miniatures, half-a-dozen Brookman and Langdon's pencils, marked H.B., and a cake of carmine from Smith and Warner's. If you could get the money from Ollier, I should like very much a cornelian seal with Shelley's coat of arms.

M. W. S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 710–13; Marshall, I, 316–18 (considerable omissions). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 130. *To Maria Gisborne*

Pisa [December 20, 1821]

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Since writing my last letter we have heard of the departure of Hunt,<sup>1</sup> and now anxiously await his arrival. He will be more comfortable than he dreams

<sup>11</sup> William Godwin (ed.), *The Posthumous Works of Mary Wollstonecraft* (London, J. Johnson, 1798, 4 vols.); *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark* (1796).

<sup>1</sup> See note 3.

of now. For Lord Byron has furnished the *pian terreno* of his own house for him, so that more lucky than the rest of the æconomical English who come here, he will find clean and spacious apartments, with every comfort about him—and a climate—such a climate—we dine in a room without a fire with all the windows open;—a tramontano reigns, which renders the sky clear and the warm sun pours into our apartments. It is cold at night—but as yet not uncomfortably so, and it now verges towards Christmas day. I am busy in arranging Hunt's rooms since that task devolves upon me.

(December 21) Since I wrote the above we have had some high wind and rain. The wind I hope and trust is in Hunt's favour so now we expect them anxiously and daily— I am so happy to think that we shall stow them comfortably when they do come and feel much gratitude towards L[ord] B[yrone] for his unpretending generosity on this occasion. My Lord is now living very sociably, giving dinners to his male acquaintance and writing divinely; perhaps by this time you have seen Cain and will agree with us in thinking it his finest production— To me it sounds like a revelation—of some works one says—one has thought of such things though one could not have expressed it so well—It is not this with Cain—one has perhaps stood on the extreme verge of such ideas and from the midst of the darkness which has surrounded us the voice of the Poet now is heard telling a wondrous tale.

To come to my own poor penmanship— Ollier does not answer our letter<sup>2</sup> I suppose that he never will and I consider this long delay as freeing us from any engagement with him though I cannot guess what we shall do next.

Our friends in Greece are getting on famously— All the Morea is subdued and much treasure was a[c]quired with the capture of Tripoliza—Some cruelties have ensued— But the oppressor must in the end buy tyranny with blood—such is the law of necessity. The young Greek Prince whom you saw at our house is made the head of the Provisional Government in Greece— He has sacrificed his whole fortune to his country, and heart and soul is bent upon her cause.

It is an age since we have heard from you I hope that you have received my last letter sent through Ollier— I am anxious concerning your answer, I want to hear of your own affairs much— You have entered on a shoreless sea—but is not your wind favourable?

And my desk too—pray at any rate get it out of Ollier's clutches and send it to me—send also with it if it be not yet shipped—some of the finest hot Bristol pressed paper but I think I mentioned that before, with a cake of Carmine from Smith & Warners— I do not think that I want any thing else except those things which I m[entioned] in my last letter.

You will be glad to hear that Shelley's [health] is much improved this winter—he is not quite well but he is much better— The air of Pisa is so mild and delightful, and the exercise on horseback agrees with him particu-

<sup>2</sup> About *Valperga*, Mary's novel.



larly— William[s] also is quite recovered— We think that we may probably spend next summer at La Spezia—at least I hope that we shall be near the sea.

How is my father? how are all our friends? How is Henry and his little bevy of admired maidens? Pray tell us how you get on—

The clock strikes twelve. I have taken to sit up rather late this last month — When all the world is in bed or asleep a [I] find a little of that solitude one cannot get in a town through the day—I may fancy myself in a hermitage [*Greek characters illegible*] (there is a little Greek for you) yet daylight brings with it all the conveniences of a town residence, & all the delights of friendly and social intercourse—few of the pains—for my horizon is so contracted that it shuts most of those out.

Most sincerely yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] An inch is left for me just to edge in “The Compliments of the Season.” We intend to make mince pies. A letter came today from Hunt<sup>3</sup>—so we need not expect him this long time— Send all S[helley]’s works, a box of ivory letters and some picture books for Percy, and the Fudge Family in Italy.<sup>4</sup>

ADDRESS: (To be forwarded immediately)/ Mrs. Gisborne/ To the care of Mess. Ollier/ Booksellers/ Vere St. Bond Street/ Inghilterra London [*Redirected to*] 33 King St./ Montague Sq. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ JA. 10/ 1822. (3) 12 o’Clock/ JA. 11/ 1822 N<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.478–79); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 174–75; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 717–19; Dowden, II, 451 (quot., 1 line). TEXT: From original letter.

### 131. To Leigh and Marianne Hunt

[Pisa, January 25, 1822]

Dearest Children

I fill up a little empty space of blank paper [left in Shelley’s letter] with many wishes, regrets and &c’s— Stay no longer, I beseech you in your cloud-environed isle—as cloudy for the soul as for the rest of it— Even friends there are only to be seen through a murky mist which will not be under the bright sky of dear Italy— My poor Marianne will get well and you all be light hearted & happy— Come quickly

Affectionately yours

Mary S.

<sup>3</sup> The letter is dated “Ramsgate, 6th December, 1821,” and appears in *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 174–75. Hunt and his family had sailed from London on November 15, but bad weather had forced the *Jane* first into Ramsgate and later into Dartmouth. The Hunts did not manage to get away from England until May 13, 1822, when they sailed on board the *David Walter*. They arrived in Genoa on June 15 and in Leghorn on July 1. See Edmund Blunden, *Leigh Hunt, A Biography* (London, Cobden-Sanderson, 1930), 163–70.

<sup>4</sup> *The Fudge Family in Paris*, edited by Thomas Brown, the younger [Thomas Moore], 1818, was very popular and led to many imitations. The British Museum Catalogue lists Fudge families in Ireland, Washington, etc.—but none in Italy.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Post Office/ Dartmouth/ England. POSTMARKS: (1) Pisa (2, English) FPO/ FE. 7/ 1822. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 484-87); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to (Shelley's letter; Mary's part is on folio 486). PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 191; *The Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*, edited by Forman, IV, 256; *Letters from P. B. Shelley to Leigh Hunt*, edited by Wise, II, 43; Julian edition, X, 352. TEXT: From original letter.

132. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Pisa,  
Feb. 9, 1822.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne

Not having heard from you I am anxious about my desk— It would have been a great convenience to me if I could have received it at the beginning of the winter But now I should like it as soon as possible— I hope that it is out of Ollier's hands— I have before said what I would have done with it— if both desks can be sent without being opened let them be sent—if not give the small one back to Peacock— Get a key made for the larger & send it I entreat you by the very next vessel. This key will cost half a guinea & Ollier will not give you the money—but give me credit for it I entreat you—& pray let me have the desk as soon as possible.

Shelley is now gone to la Spezia to get houses for our Colony for the summer<sup>1</sup>— It will be a large one, too large I am afraid for unity—yet I hope not— there will be Lord Byron who will have a large & beautiful boat built on purpose by some English navy officers<sup>2</sup> at Genoa— There will be the Countess Guiccioli and her brother—the Williams', whom you know—Trelawny<sup>3</sup>—a kind of half Arab Englishman—whose life has been as changeful as that of Anastatius & who recounts the adventures of his youth as eloquently and well as the imagined Greek—he is clever—for his moral qualities I am yet in the dark he is a strange web which I am endeavouring to unravel— I would fain learn if generosity is united to impetuosity—nobility of spirit to his assumption of singularity & independance—he is six feet high—raven black hair which curls thickly & shortly like a Moors dark grey—expressive eyes—overhanging brows upturned lips & a smile which expresses good nature & kindheartedness—his shoulders are high like an Orientalist—his voice is mo-

<sup>1</sup> Shelley and Williams left Pisa on February 7 on a house-hunting trip to Spezia. They returned on February 11, having found only one usable house available. Long before this it had been decided that the Shelleys, Byron and the Guiccioli and her family, and the Williamses would spend the summer together on the shore near Spezia; but the impossibility of finding houses made the scheme fall through. As it was, the Shelleys and the Williamses had to occupy the same house, although they had not planned to do this. Before a house was finally selected, two more trips had to be made: by Shelley and Williams, on April 17; and by Williams, Jane, and Claire, on April 23 to Lerici.

<sup>2</sup> The *Bolivar*, built by Captain Daniel Roberts, R. N., who also built Shelley's forty-foot boat, the *Don Juan*.

<sup>3</sup> Edward John Trelawny (1792-1881), son of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Trelawny (1757-1820). He arrived in Pisa on January 14, and on the same day met Shelley in the Williamses' apartment. In the summer of 1820 in Geneva he, along with Williams and Captain Roberts, had been interested in Shelley by Thomas Medwin. He came to Italy with the intention of hunting in the Maremma with Roberts during the winter, and of boating on the Mediterranean with Shelley and Byron in the summer.

notonous yet emphatic & his language as he relates the events of his life energetic & simple—whether the tale be one of blood & horror or of irresistable comedy His company is delightful for he excites me to think and if any evil shade the intercourse that time will unveil—the sun will rise or night darken all.—There will be besides a Captain Roberts whom I do not know—a very rough subject I fancy—a famous angler—&c— We are to have a smaller boat and now that these first divine spring days are come (you know them well) the sky clear—the sun hot—the hedges budding—we sitting without a fire & the windows open—I begin to long for the sparkling waves the olive covered hills & vine shaded *pergolas* of Spezia—however it would be madness to go yet— Yet as *ceppo* was bad we hope for a good *Pascua* and if April prove fine we shall fly with the swallows.

The Opera here has been detestable— The English Sinclair<sup>4</sup> is the primo tenore, & acquits himself excellently—but the Italians after the first have enviously selected such operas as give him little or nothing to do— We have English here & some English balls & parties to which I (*mirabile dictu*) go sometimes.<sup>5</sup> [We] have Taaffe who bores us out of our [senses] when he comes & writes complimentary verses telling a young lady that her eyes shed flowers why therefore should he send any

Lovely flowers from heavenly bowrs  
Love & friendship are what are due.

I have sent my novel<sup>6</sup> to Papa— I long to hear some news of it—as with an authors vanity I want to see it in print & hear the praises of my friends—I should like as I said when you went away—a Copy of *Matilda*<sup>7</sup>—it might come out with the desk.

I hope as the town fills to hear better news of your plans— We long to hear from you— What does Henry do? how many times has he been in love—

Ever yours,

Mary W S.

[P.S.] Shelley w[oul]d like to see the review of the *Prometheus* in the *Quarterly*.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> John Sinclair (1791–1857), a popular English opera singer, a tenor. He was in Italy in 1821–23.

<sup>5</sup> Mary, accompanied by Trelawny, had gone to a ball at Mrs. Beauclerc's.

<sup>6</sup> *Valperga*.

<sup>7</sup> A story written earlier by Mary and never published. The original MS is owned by Lord Abinger. The story is mentioned in Mary's letters (136, 139, 144, and 177) of April 6, June 2, August 15, 1822, and May 2, 1823, to Mrs. Gisborne; and in her journal for 1821: "Aug. 6—Read 'Matilda' to Edward [Williams]."; "Sept. 4—Read 'Matilda' to Jane [Williams]."—*Shelley and Mary*, III, 658, 691. See also Elizabeth Nitchie, "Mary Shelley's *Matilda*: An Unpublished Story and Its Biographical Significance," *Studies in Philology*, July 1943, 447–62.

<sup>8</sup> An outrageously stupid review by (?) W. S. Walker in the *Quarterly* for October, 1821. "In short," writes the critic, ". . . in the whole volume there is not one original image of nature, one simple expression of human feeling, or one new association of the appearances of the moral with those of the material world." (See White, *The Unextinguished Hearth*, 240–50.)

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 King Street West/ Bryanstone Square/ Inghilterra London. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ FE. 23/ 1822. ENDORSED: Recd. 23rd Feb. 1822. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.511, 513); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 178 (extracts); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 741-43; Dowden, II, 461, 466 (quotes., 20 lines); Marshall, I, 324-26. TEXT: From original letter.

### 133. To Claire Clairmont

[Pisa] Wednesday, 20th Feby. [1822]

My dear Claire,

I have this moment received your letter, which both surprises and grieves me greatly. Come here directly. I will return with you to Florence; but in every way it is best that you come here; take your place and come tomorrow morning. You ought and must see Mrs. Mason before you leave Italy, if you do. I think in every way it would make you happier to come here,—and when here, other views may arise,—at least discuss your plans in the midst of your friends before you go. This letter you will have, I hope, by an express tonight.

Yours affectly,  
Mary.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Henry A. Bright wrote (*Athenaeum*, April 5, 1879, 438): "A curious little note from Mrs. Shelley to Miss Clairmont was given by the latter lady to a relative of mine in March of 1832 at Pisa, as an autograph . . ." PRINTED: *The Athenaeum*, No. 2684, (April 5, 1879), 438. TEXT: From *ibid*.

### 134. To Marianne Hunt

[Pisa] 5th March, 1822.

My dearest Marianne—

I hope that this letter will find you quite well, recovering from your severe attack, and looking towards your haven Italy with best hopes. I do indeed believe that you will find a relief here from your many English cares, and that the winds which waft you will sing the requiem to all your ills. It was indeed unfortunate that you encountered such weather on the very threshold of your journey, and as the wind howled through the long night, how often did I think of you! At length it seemed as if we should never, never meet; but I will not give way to such a presentiment. We enjoy here divine weather. The sun hot, too hot, with a freshness and clearness in the breeze that bears with it all the delights of spring. The hedges are budding, and you should see me and my friend Mrs. Williams poking about for violets by the sides of dry ditches; she being herself—

A violet by a mossy stone  
Half hidden from the eye.

Yesterday a countryman seeing our dilemma, since the ditch was not quite dry, insisted on gathering them for us, and when we resisted, saying that we had no *quattrini* (i.e. farthings, being the generic name for all money), he indignantly

exclaimed, *Oh! se lo faccio per interesse!* How I wish you were with us in our rambles! Our good cavaliers flock together, and as they do not like *fetching a walk with the absurd womankind*, Jane (i.e. Mrs. Williams) and I are off together, and talk morality and pluck violets by the way. I look forward to many duets with this lady and Hunt. She has a very pretty voice, and a taste and ear for music which is almost miraculous. The harp is her favourite instrument; but we have none, and a very bad piano; however, as it is, we pass very pleasant evenings, though I can hardly bear to hear her sing "Donne l'amore"; it transports me so entirely back to your little parlour at Hampstead—and I see the piano, the bookcase, the prints, the casts—and hear Mary's *far ha ha-a!*

We are in great uncertainty as to where we shall spend the summer. There is a beautiful bay about fifty miles off, and as we have resolved on the sea, Shelley bought a boat. We wished very much to go there; perhaps we shall still, but as yet we can find but one house; but as we are a colony "which moves altogether or not at all," we have not yet made up our minds. The apartments which we have prepared for you in Lord Byron's house will be very warm for the summer; and indeed for the two hottest months I should think that you had better go into the country. Villas about here are tolerably cheap, and they are perfect paradises. Perhaps, as it was with me, Italy will not strike you as so divine at first; but each day it becomes dearer and more delightful; the sun, the flowers, the air, all is more sweet and more balmy than in the *Ultima Thule* that you inhabit.

M. W. S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Owned by Francis Edwards, Ltd., in February, 1922 (Catalogue 425, item 250); A.L. 3 pp. 4to (torn and imperfect, wanting part of the last leaf with the signature). PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 176–77; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 759–60; Dowden, II, 467, 479 (quotes., 17 & 4 lines); Marshall, I, 332–33. TEXT: From Marshall.

### 135. To Maria Gisborne

[Pisa] March 7th, 1822.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

I am very sorry that you have so much trouble about my commissions, and vainly too! *Ma che vuole!* Ollier will not give you the money and we are, to tell you the truth, too poor at present to send you a cheque upon our Banker; two or three circumstances have caused

—that climax of all human ills;  
The inflammation of our weekly bills.

But far more than that we have not touched a quattrino of our Xmas quarter, since debts in England and other calls swallowed it entirely up.—For the present therefore we must dispense with those things that I asked you to get. As to the desk, we received last post from Ollier (without a line) the bill of lading that he talks of, & *se dio vuole* we shall receive them safe, the vessel in which

they were ship[p]ed is not yet arrived. The worst of keeping on with Ollier<sup>1</sup> (though it is the best I believe after all) is that you will never be able to make anything of his accounts until you can compare the number of copies in hand with his account of their sale. As for my novel,<sup>2</sup> I shipped it off long ago to my father, telling him to make the best of it, & by the way in which he answered my letter I fancy that he thinks he can make something of it; this is much better than O[llier] for I should never have got a penny from him & moreover he is a very bad bookseller to publish with—*ma basta poi* with all these *secaturas*. Poor dear Hunt, you will have heard by this time of the disastrous conclusion of his second embarkment— He is to try a third time in April & if he do[es] not succeed then—we must say that the sea is *un vero precipizio*, & let him try land. By the bye why not consult Varley<sup>3</sup> on the result—I have tried the sors Homeri and the sors Virgilia; the first says (I will write this Greek better, but I thought that Mr. G[isborne] could read the Romaic writing, & I now quite forget what it was)—

Ἡλώμην, τείως μοι ἀδελφεὸν ἄλλος ἔπεφεν.

ὥς δ' ὅπότε Ἰασίῳ ἐϋπλόκαμος Δημήτηρ.

Δουράτεον μέγαν ἵππον, ὃθ' εἶατο πάντες ἄριστοι.

which first seems to say that he will come though his brother may be prosecuted for a libel in the meantime—of the 2nd I can make neither head or tail. And the third is as oracularly obscure as one could wish, for who these great people are who sat in a wooden horse *chi lo sa*? I should think it were a hobby—and who best or worst but has that? but then folks ride on & not in a hobby. Virgil, except the first line which is unfavourable is as enigmatical as Homer—

Fulgores nunc terrificos, sonitumque, metumque

Jam leves calamos, et rasæ hastilia virgæ

Connexosque angues, ipsamque in pectore divæ.

But to speak of predictions or anteductions some of Varley's are curious

<sup>1</sup> For the last six months Shelley had been getting more and more impatient with Ollier, from whom he had had very few letters. His failure to send any news about *Adonais*, *Hellas*, *The Defence of Poetry*, and Mary's *Valperga* at length moved Shelley to write Mr. Gisborne on January 26, 1822: "I wish now to have done with Ollier as a publisher, and should feel exceedingly grateful to you if you would undertake to extract me from his clutches. I give you hereby, full authority, to settle my accounts with him, and to take from him all the unsold copies of my works; which I wish to be transferred to another publisher, and a fresh title printed to each with his name, and advertisements issued in course. . . . I would not . . . continue my connexion with Mr. Ollier a single day after you have found another publisher."—Julian edition, X, 353–54. Mr. Gisborne, after talking with Ollier, wrote that he thought a change of publisher at the time was inadvisable, and Shelley soon agreed reluctantly to retain Ollier.

<sup>2</sup> *Valperga*. On January 11, 1822, Shelley had written to Ollier: "Considering your total neglect as a [negative?] upon my last [modification] of the proposal for Mrs. Shelley's novel—I have sent it to Mr. Godwin with liberty to dispose of it to the best advantage, and should you be still desirous of publishing it, you may treat with him for the copyright."—Julian edition, X, 343.

<sup>3</sup> John Varley (1778–1824), a landscape painter, art teacher, and astrologer. He was a remarkable man with great abilities, prodigious energy, and many eccentricities. His enthusiasm for astrology (which he did not practice professionally) brought to him many people who desired to have their horoscopes cast. His first wife (d. 1824) was a sister of John Gisborne.

enough.<sup>4</sup> Ill-fortune in May or June 1815. No, it was then that he arranged his income—there was no ill except health, *al solito*, at that time—the particular days of the 2d [and] 14th [of] June 1820 were not ill, but the whole time was disastrous—it was then that we were alarmed by Paolo's attack—a disturbance about a lady in the winter of last year enough God knows<sup>5</sup>—nothing particular about a bouncing fat lady at 10 at night—& indeed things got more quiet in April—in July 1799 S[helley] was only seven years of age— A great blow-up every seven years—S[helley] is not at home when he returns I will ask him what happened when he was fourteen—in his 22nd year we made our *scap[p]atina*,<sup>6</sup> at 28–9 a good deal of discomfort on a certain point but it hardly amounted to a blow-up. Pray ask Varley also about me. So Hogg is shocked that for good neighbourhoods sake I visited the piano di sotto<sup>7</sup>—let him reassure himself, since instead of a weekly it was only a monthly visit—in fact after going 3 times I staid away until I heard he was going away—he preached against atheism & they said against S[helley]. As he invited me himself to come this appeared to me very impertinent, so I wrote to him to ask him whether he intended any personal allusion, but he denied the charge most entirely—this affair as you may guess among the English at Pisa made a great noise—the gossip here is of course out of all bounds, some people have given them something to talk about— I have seen little of it all but that which I have seen makes me long most eagerly for some sea girt isle where with Shelley, my babe, my books & horses we may give the rest to the winds. This we shall not have. For the present S[helley] is entangled with Lord B[yron] who is in a terrible fright lest he should desert him— We shall have boats & go somewhere on the sea coast where I dare say we shall spend our time agreeably enough for I like the Williams' exceedingly—though there my list begins & ends. Emilia married Biondi<sup>8</sup>—we hear that she leads him & his mother (to

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Gisborne had written Mary on February 9, 1882 (Marshall, I, 328):

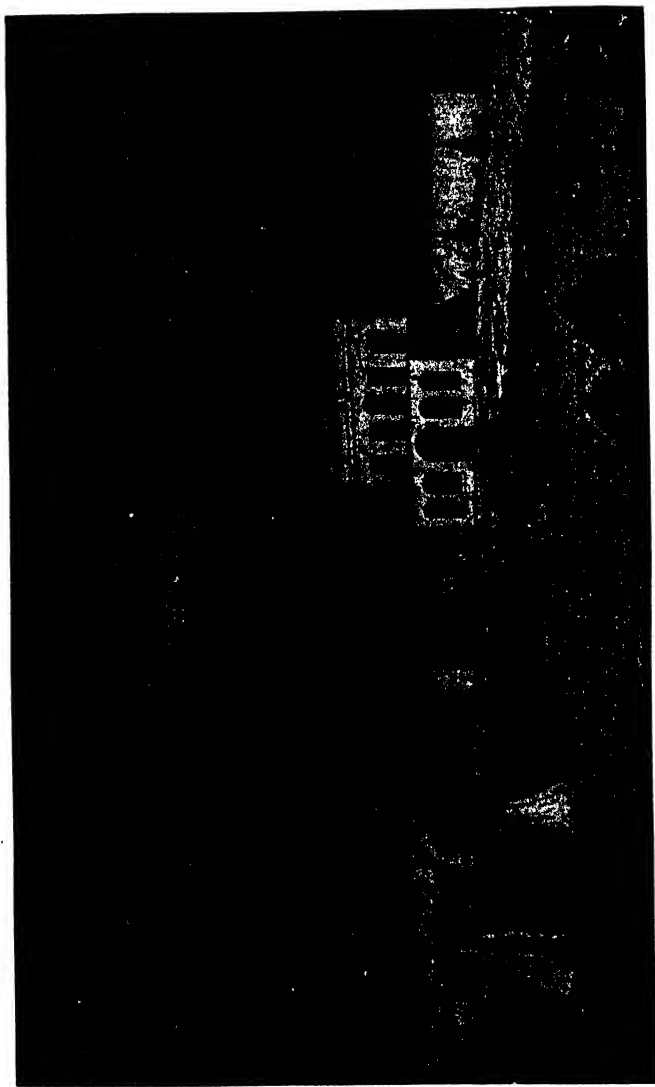
"We invited Varley one evening to meet Hogg, who was curious to see a man really believing in astrology in the nineteenth century. Varley, as usual, was not sparing of his predictions. We talked of Shelley without mentioning his name; Varley was curious, and being informed by Hogg of his exact age, but describing his person as short and corpulent, and himself as a *bon vivant*, Varley amused us with the following remarks: 'Your friend suffered from ill-fortune in May or June 1815. Vexatious affairs on the 2d and 14th of June, or perhaps latter end of May 1820. The following year, disturbance about a lady. Again, last April, at 10 at night, or at noon, disturbance about a bouncing stout lady, and others. At six years of age, noticed by ladies and gentlemen for learning. In July 1799, beginning of charges made against him. In September 1800, at noon, or dusk, very violent charges. Scrape at fourteen years of age. Eternal warfare against parents and public opinion, and a great blow-up every seven years till death,' etc., etc. *Is all this true?*"

<sup>5</sup> The lady was, of course, Emilia Viviani.

<sup>6</sup> Their flight,—that is, their elopement on July 28, 1814.

<sup>7</sup> Mrs. Gisborne wrote on February 9, 1822: "Your friend Hogg is *molto scandalizzato* to hear of your weekly visits to the *piano di sotto* [church services held by Dr. Nott on the ground floor of the Tre Palazzi]."—Marshall, I, 328. Mary's journal for Sunday, December 9, 1821, reads: "Go to church at Dr. Nott's."—*Shelley and Mary*, III, 716. For the Sundays of December 16, 1821, and February 24, 1822, is the notation: "Go to church." On Sunday, March 3: "A note to, and a visit from Dr. Nott. Go to church." On Wednesday, April 10: "Call on Miss Nott."—*ibid.*, III, 717, 753, 758, 778. See Dowden, II, 478–79.

<sup>8</sup> On September 8, 1821, Emilia had married Luigi Biondi of Pomarance, in the church of S. Pietro ad Ischia.



*Villa Magni, Shelley's residence on the Gulf of Spezia, 1822,  
with the Don Juan in the foreground*

*Reproduced from Trelauney's  
Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron*





use a vulgarism) *a devil of a life*— The conclusion of our friendship *a la Italiana* puts me in mind of a nursery rhyme which runs thus—

As I was going down Cranbourne lane,  
Cranbourne lane was dirty,  
And there I met a pretty maid,  
Who dropt to me a curtsey;  
I gave her cakes, I gave her wine,  
I gave her sugar candy,  
But oh! the little naughty girl!  
She asked me for some brandy.

Now turn Cranbourne lane into Pisan acquaintances, which I am sure are dirty enough, & brandy into that wherewithall to buy brandy (& that no small sum *però*) & you have the whole story of Shelley's Italian platronics. We now know indeed few of those whom we knew last year. Pacchiani is at Prato—Mavrocordato in Greece—the Argyropulo's in Florence—& so the world slides — Taaffe is still here—the but[t] of Lord B[yron]'s quizzing & the poet laureate of Pisa—on the occasion of a young lady's birthday he sent her the following verses

Eyes that shed a thousand flowers  
Why should flowers be sent to you  
Sweetest flowers of heavenly bowers,  
Love & friendship are what are due.

Then he wrote an elegy on the death of a saxon Prince beginning *Woe! woe!* but he put in another *woe!* lest *woe* should be read *whoo!* & that at the beginning of his poem was too great a kindness to bestow on his readers, it ought to have been *geho!*

Well what more news have I for you? none I think— Could you not in any way write for Matilda?— I want it very much. I hope you will succeed in your new plan, you ought at least—and I hope your next letter will bring some good news. Your healths are all good I hope. After some divine *Italian* weather we are now enjoying some fine *English weather cioè*—it does not rain—but not a ray can pierce the web aloft.

Most truly yours

Mary W S.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 Kings Street West,/ Bryanstone Square/ London/ Inghilterra. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) 12 o'Clock/ MR. 21/ 1822 N<sup>o</sup>. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.514-15); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. (Shelley writes a letter to Mr. Gisborne on the same folder.) PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 182-83 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 761-64; Dowden, II, 381-82, 78-79 (quotes., 24 & 22 lines); Marshall, I, 329-31. TEXT: From original letter.

## 136. To Maria Gisborne

Pisa,  
6th April, 1822.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne—

Not many days after I had written to you concerning the fate which ever pursues us at spring-tide, a circumstance happened which showed that we were not forgotten this year. Although, indeed, now that it is all over, I begin to fear that the King of Gods and men will not consider it a sufficiently heavy visitation, although for a time it threatened to be frightful enough. Two Sundays ago,<sup>1</sup> Lord Byron, Shelley, Trelawny, Captain Hay, Count Gamba, and Taaffe were returning from their usual evening ride, when, near the Porta della Piazza, they were passed by a soldier who galloped through the midst of them knocking up against Taaffe. This nice little gentleman exclaimed, "Shall we endure this man's insolence?" Lord Byron replied, "No! we will bring him to an account," and Shelley (whose blood always boils at any insolence offered by a soldier) added, "As you please!" So they put spurs to their horses (i.e. all but Taaffe, who remained quietly behind), followed and stopped the man, and, fancying that he was an officer, demanded his name and address, and gave their cards. The man who, I believe, was half drunk, replied only by all the oaths and abuse in which the Italian language is so rich. He ended by saying, "If I liked I could draw my sabre and cut you all to pieces, but as it is, I only arrest you." and he called out to the guards at the gate *arrestategli*. Lord Byron laughed at this, and saying *arrestateci pure*, gave spurs to his horse and rode towards the gate, followed by the rest. Lord Byron and Gamba passed, but before the others could get through, the soldier got under the gateway, called on the guard to stop them, and drawing his sabre, began to cut at them. It happened that I and the Countess Guiccioli were in a carriage close behind and saw it all, and you may guess how frightened we were when we saw our cavaliers cut at, they being totally unarmed. Their only safety was, that the field of battle being so confined, they got close under the man, and were able to arrest his arm. Captain Hay was, however, wounded in his face, and Shelley thrown from his horse. I cannot tell you how it all ended, but after cutting and slashing a little, the man sheathed his sword and rode on, while the others got from their horses to assist poor Hay, who was faint from loss of blood. Lord Byron, when he had passed the gate, rode to his own house, got a sword-stick from one of his servants, and was returning to the gate, Lung' Arno, when he met this man, who held out his hand saying, *Siete contento?* Lord Byron replied, "No! I must know your name, that I may

<sup>1</sup> Mary's letters furnish the best account of this affair [with the Italian dragoon, Sergeant-Major Stefano Masi. Williams's *Journal* (Richard Garnett [ed.], *Journal of Edward Ellerker Williams* [London, Elkin Mathews, 1902], 42-54) furnishes many interesting details, as does Mary's journal, printed in *Shelley and Mary*. See also Dowden, II, 149-81. Count Pietro Gamba was la Guiccioli's brother. Captain Hay has been no further identified than as a Maremma hunter and friend of Byron. According to Williams's *Journal*, 51, Captain Hay departed for England on April 3.

require satisfaction of you." The soldier said, *Il mio nome è Masi, sono sargente maggiore*, etc., etc. While they were talking, a servant of Lord Byron came and took hold of the bridle of the sergeant's horse. Lord Byron ordered him to let it go, and immediately the man put his horse to a gallop, but, passing Casa Lanfranchi, one of Lord Byron's servants thought that he had killed his master and was running away; determining that he should not go scot-free, he ran at him with a pitchfork and wounded him. The man rode on a few paces, cried out, *Sono ammazzato*, and fell, was carried to the hospital, the misericordia bell ringing. We were all assembled at Casa Lanfranchi, nursing our wounded man, and poor Teresa, from the excess of her fright, was worse than any, when what was our consternation when we heard that the man's wound was considered mortal! Luckily none but ourselves knew who had given the wound; it was said by the wise Pisani, to have been one of Lord Byron's servants, set on by his padrone, and they pitched upon a poor fellow merely because *aveva lo sguardo fiero, quanto un assassino*.<sup>2</sup> For some days Masi continued in great danger, but he is now recovering. As long as it was thought he would die, the Government did nothing; but now that he is nearly well, they have imprisoned two men, one of Lord Byron's servants (the one with the *sguardo fiero*), and the other a servant of Teresa's, who was behind our carriage, both perfectly innocent, but they have been kept *in segreto* these ten days, and God knows when they will be let out. What think you of this? Will it serve for our spring adventure? It is blown over now, it is true, but our fate has, in general, been in common with Dame Nature, and March winds and April showers have brought forth May flowers.

You have no notion what a ridiculous figure Taaffe cut in all this—he kept far behind during the danger, but the next day he wished to take all the honour to himself, vowed that all Pisa talked of him alone, and coming to Lord Byron said, "My Lord, if you do not dare ride out today, I will alone." But the next day he again changed, he was afraid of being turned out of Tuscany, or of being obliged to fight with one of the officers of the sergeant's regiment, of neither of which things there was the slightest danger, so he wrote a declaration to the Governor to say that he had nothing to do with it; so embroiling himself with Lord Byron, he got between Scylla and Charybdis, from which he has not yet extricated himself;<sup>3</sup> for ourselves, we do not fear any ulterior consequences.

10th April.

We received *Hellas* today, and the bill of lading.<sup>4</sup> Shelley is well pleased

<sup>2</sup>This was Tita. Williams's *Journal*, 48–50, states that Tita and Vincenzo were imprisoned on March 27, and that on March 29 "Vincenzo and another man [were] liberated. Strong suspicions of Antonio, the Countess's man." Antonio was arrested and remained in prison until after June 2; Tita was released some days before that date. See Letter 139.

<sup>3</sup>Williams's *Journal*, 50, indicates that Mary erred slightly here, for on April 3 Williams notes: "Lord B. willing to give his hand to Taaffe. As usual all right again."

<sup>4</sup>On the same day Shelley wrote to Mr. Gisborne: "I have received *Hellas*, which is prettily printed, and with fewer mistakes than any poem I ever published."—Julian edition, X, 370.

with the former, though there are some mistakes. The only danger would arise from the vengeance of Masi, but the moment he is able to move, he is to be removed to another town; he is a *pessimo soggetto*, being the crony of Soldaini, Rosselmini, and Augustini, Pisan names of evil fame, which, perhaps, you may remember. There is only one consolation in all this, that if it be our fate to suffer, it is more agreeable, and more safe to suffer in company with five or six than alone.

Well! after telling you this long story, I must relate our other news. And first the Greek. Ali Pashaw is dead, and his head sent to Constantinople; the reception of it was celebrated there by the massacre of four thousand Greeks. The latter, however, get on. The Turkish fleet of 25 sail of the line-of-war vessels, and 40 transports, endeavoured to surprise the Greek fleet in its winter quarters; finding them prepared, they bore away for Zante, and pursued by the Greeks, took refuge in the bay of Naupacto. Here they first blockaded them, and obtained a complete victory. All the soldiers on board the transports, in endeavouring to land, were cut to pieces, and the fleet taken or destroyed. I heard something about Hellenists which greatly pleased me. When any one asked of the peasants of the Morea what news there is, and if they have had any victory, they reply: "I do not know, but for us it is  $\eta\ \tau\alpha\nu,\ \eta\ \epsilon\pi\ \tau\alpha\varsigma$ , being their Doric pronunciation of  $\eta\ \tau\alpha\nu,\ \eta\ \epsilon\pi\ \tau\eta\varsigma$ , the speech of the Spartan mother, on presenting his shield to her son; "With this, or on this."

I wish, my dear Mrs. Gisborne, that you would send the first part of this letter, addressed to Mr. W. Godwin at Nash's,<sup>5</sup> Esq., Dover Street. I wish him to have an account of the fray, and you will thus save me the trouble of writing it over again, for what with writing and talking about it, I am quite tired. In a late letter of mine to my father, I requested him to send you *Matilda*.<sup>6</sup> I hope that he has complied with my desire, and, in that case, that you will get it copied and send it to me by the first opportunity, perhaps by Hunt, if he comes at all. I do not mention commissions to you, for although wishing much for the things about which I wrote [we have], for the present, no money to spare. We wish very much to hear from you again, and to learn if there are any hopes of your getting on in your plans, what Henry is doing, and how you continue to like England. The months of February and March were with us as hot as an English June. In the first days of April we have had some very cold weather; so that we are obliged to light fires again. Shelley has been much better in health this winter than any other since I have known him, Pisa certainly agrees with him exceedingly well, which is its only merit, in my eyes. I wish fate had bound us to Naples instead. Percy is quite well; he begins to talk, Italian only now, and to call things *bello* and *buono*, but the droll thing is, that he is right about the genders. A silk *vestito* is *bello*, but a new *frusta* is *bella*. He is a fine boy, full of life, and very pretty. Williams is very well, and

<sup>5</sup> William Godwin, Jr., was employed at the office of Mr. Nash, the architect.

<sup>6</sup> See Letter 132, note 7.

they are getting on very well. Mrs. Williams is a miracle of economy, and, as Mrs. Godwin used to call it, makes both ends meet with great comfort to herself and others. Medwin is gone to Rome<sup>7</sup>; we have heaps of the gossip of a petty town this winter, and being just in the *coterie* where it was all carried on; but now *Grazie a Messer Domenedio*, the English are almost all gone, and we, being left alone, all subjects of discord and clacking cease. You may conceive what a *bisbiglio* our adventure made. The Pisans were all enraged because the *maledetti inglesi* were not punished; yet when the gentlemen returned from their ride the following day (busy fate), an immense crowd was assembled before Casa Lanfranchi, and they all took off their hats to them. Adieu. *State bene e felice*. Best remembrances to Mr. Gisborne, and compliments to Henry, who will remember Hay as one of the Maremma hunters; he is a friend of Lord Byron's.

Yours ever truly,  
Mary W. S.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Trelawny's *Recollections*, 123-24 (quot., 7 lines); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 771-76; Dowden, II, 479 (quot., 8 lines); Marshall, I, 337-41. TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 137. To Leigh Hunt

[Pisa, April 10, 1822]

My dear Hunt

Shelley sends the enclosed order on Brooks although he hopes there is no necessity for it. This order was addressed to Brooks & you could not have the money until past Lady Day.

You will wonder what the enclosed is— If you read the first page you will find that it is an account of a brawl between the 5 gentlemen whose name[s] are subjoined and a soldier here— It made a great noise, for the man (as you will find by the last affidavit) was wounded by a pitchfork & his life despaired of for some days. He was wounded, as is asserted, by a servant of Lord Byrons, and two of them are still imprisoned on suspicion, though we know that those two in particular are perfectly innocent. The mode of conducting the judicial part of the affair is a specimen of their law here. While [the] man was in danger not a single step was taken, & the man who wounded him had every opportunity to evade, as he got better they imprisoned these 2 men on suspicion, & they have been kept a fortnight on jail allowance without being allowed to see any friends, not even their wives, or to receive any assistance or even change of linen from their friends. The second paper is Taaffes affidavit— I think that before now I have had occasion to mention this wise little gentleman—he was riding with Lord B[yrone] at the time—& when he saw his friends in danger prudently kept out of the way: was afterwards terribly afraid of being implicated & turned out of Tuscany & so wrote the en-

<sup>7</sup> He left Pisa on March 9.

closed to justify himself. Of course if none of the public papers take notice of this affair do you not in your Examiner for there is no great glory attached to such a row; if however any garbled accounts get current, I should think you might manufacture from these documents, which are the judicial ones, a true statement. I ought not to omit that a lady writes to me from Florence<sup>1</sup> to say—that she hears nothing but praise of Lord Byron's & his friends' conduct on this occasion both from the English Minister, Mr. Dawkins, & the Tuscan Court.

So much, my dear Friend, for this business to which Lord Byron attaches considerable importance, although to us, ever since the convalescence of the soldier it has been a matter of perfect indifference. Tell poor dear Marianne not to tease her spirits by writing, but to nurse herself, so that she may come safely and well. It appears to me a dream that you will ever reach these Tuscan shores—one begins to distrust every thing after so many disappointments. You will find Shelley in infinitely better health; indeed he has got over this winter delightfully. Pisa is a Paradise during that season for invalids, although I fear that Marianne will find it rather hot in the summer—but once here, I doubt not but that in some way all will go well.

You do not mention your health in the last [letter], but I do not doubt that it is improved [in] exact proportion to the number of miles you are distant from London; God knows when I shall again see that benedetto luogo—but even at this distance it sometimes strikes me with sudden fright to think that any chain binds me to it.

My love to Marianne; I hope to have no answer to this letter but that you will in person acknowledge it— My dear Hunt

Affectionately yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] The Gisbornes have my account of the *zuffa*; if you w[oul]d like to see it.

By the note to Taaffe's *giuramento* you will see that he is a bad horseman & that Lord Byron is accustomed to joke him on the many falls which he has had—while Taaffe always vows it was only *salti del cavallo*—that “*come di entrare nel fosso*” was a very famous affair.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esq./ Stone House/ Near Plymouth/ Inghilterra, Devon.  
POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ AP. 27/ 1822. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff. 516–17); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 109–11; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 788–90. (Dated April 27 in both.) TEXT: From original letter.

### 138. To Thomas Medwin\*

Pisa. April 12th—1822.

Dear Medwin

Excuse me that I write instead of Shelley, who you know is a very bad

<sup>1</sup> Probably Mrs. Beauclerc.

correspondent. At Lord Byron's desire I send you the copies of some of the documents concerning the row that took place a fortnight ago.<sup>1</sup> You see what a goose Taaffe makes of himself; Lord B. says that the words he used were, "Shall we endure this man's insolence?" Lord B. replied, "No, we will bring him to an account." Masi after having been in great danger is now recovering & is to be removed from Pisa, as he vows deadly revenge; the Police here have imprisoned Tita & the Countess Guiccioli's servant, as suspected of having wounded the sergeant, they have been there a fortnight and one can guess when they will be let out: they are both perfectly innocent. It so happened that Mad<sup>me</sup> Guiccioli & I were in the carriage ten paces behind and saw the whole zuffa, and as you may suppose were not a little frightened. No measures have been taken except with these two men; no other person, more particularly none of the Gentlemen have been in any degree molested, but have ridden out as usual every day since. I say this because I hear that various reports have been circulated at Rome concerning the arrest of Lord B. all utterly devoid of foundation. You cannot conceive the part Taaffe played; as you may guess from his affidavit and as I saw with my own eyes, he kept at a safe distance during the row, but fearing to be sent out of Tuscany, he wrote at first such a report as embroiled him with Lord Byron, and what between insolence and dastard humility (a combination by no means uncommon in real life) kept himself in hot water when in fact he had nothing to fear.

You have of course heard that Mrs. Beauclerk has removed to Florence; Pisa is fast emptying of strangers. Lord B. will, I believe pass the summer in the vicinity of Livorno; but in all probability the W[illiamse]s & we shall be at la Spezia. During the last week we have suffered greatly from the cold; winter returned upon us, doubly disagreeable from our having fostered the agreeable hope that we had said a last *rivederla*. The country is however quite green, the blossoms are fading from the fruit trees, and if the wind change we shall feel summer at last.

Shelley has received *Hellas* from England; it is well printed & with not many faults. Lord B. seems pleased with it. His Lordship has had out from England a volume of poems entitled "Dramas of the Ancient World"<sup>2</sup>—and by a strange coincidence, the author (one David Lindsey) has chosen three subjects treated by Lord Byron; Cain, the Deluge and Sardanapalus. The two first are treated quite differently. Cain begins *after* the death of Abel & is entitled the Destiny & death of Cain. I mention them because they are works of considerable talent, and strength of poetry & expression; although of course in comparison with Lord Byron as unlike as Short life and Immortality. This is all the literary news I have for you.

I am afraid that you will be frightened at the immensity of the packet I

<sup>1</sup> Medwin printed two of these documents in the Appendix to his *Conversations of Lord Byron*, A New Edition (London, Henry Colburn, 1824), iii–ix.

<sup>2</sup> By David Lyndsay (Edinburgh, 1822). Williams made virtually the same comment in his journal for April 9, on which day he read them to Jane, his wife (*Journal*, 51).



send; but the papers were consigned to us by Lord B., and his name must be our excuse. The affidavits being in Italian will be an exercise for you, especially Taaffe's who has used I think all the many adverbs with which the Italian language is enriched withal. I could not prevail on myself to undertake the task of translating & transcribing such a rigmarole; especially as I am heartily tired of the whole subject; it flooded us at first, but the tide has now made its reflux, leaving the shingles of the mind as dry as ever. With the exception of some anxiety on the score of the two prisoners.

Edward is quite well; Jane I fancy will soon write to you. Our little Percy is as blooming as ever. I hope we shall be favoured with a visit on your return northward; Shelley desires his best remembrances

Truly Yours

Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: Thomas Medwin Esq. ORIGINAL: Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 258-59 (incomplete). TEXT: From original letter.

### 139. To Maria Gisborne

Casa Magni, presso a Lerici.  
June 2, 1822.

My dear Mrs. Gisborne—

We received a letter from Mr. Gisborne the other day, which promised one from you. It is not yet come, and although I think that you are two or three in my debt, yet I am good enough to write to you again, and thus to increase your debt. Nor will I allow you, with one letter, to take advantage of the Insolvent Act, and thus to free yourself from all claims at once. When I last wrote, I said that I hoped our spring visitation had come and was gone, but this year we were not quit so easily. However, before I mention anything else, I will finish the story of the *zuffa* as far as it is yet gone. I think that in my last I left the sergeant recovering; one of Lord Byron's and one of the Guiccioli's servants in prison on suspicion, though both were innocent. The judge or advocate, called a Cancelliere, sent from Florence to determine the affair, dislikes the Pisans, and, having *poca paga*, expected a present from Milordo, and so favoured our part of the affair, was very civil, and came to our houses to take depositions against the law.<sup>1</sup> For the sake of the lesson, Hogg should have been there to learn to crossquestion. The Cancelliere, a talkative buffoon of a Florentine, with "mille scuse per l'incomodo," asked, "Dove fu lei la sera del 24 Marzo? Andai a spasso in carrozza, fuori della Porta della Piaggia." A little clerk, seated beside him, with a great pile of papers before him, now dipped

<sup>1</sup> This examination took place on Friday, April 19, on which day Williams wrote in his journal: "Mary and the Guiccioli underwent five hours' examination this morning. The Countess said to the judge that she could not swear, but that she thought Mr. Taaffe was the person who stabbed the dragoon."—*Journal of Edward Ellerker Williams*, 53. The Countess was, of course, mistaken—it may be purposely.

his pen in his ink-horn, and looked expectant, while the Cancelliere, turning his eyes up to the ceiling, repeated, "Io fui a spasso," etc. This scene lasted two, four, six hours, as it happened. In the space of two months the depositions of fifteen people were taken, and finding Tita (Lord Byron's servant) perfectly innocent, the Cancelliere ordered him to be liberated, but the Pisan police took fright at his beard. They called him "il barbone," and, although it was declared that on his exit from prison he should be shaved, they could not tranquillise their mighty minds, but banished him. We, in the meantime, were come to this place, so he has taken refuge with us. He is an excellent fellow, faithful, courageous, and daring. How could it happen that the Pisans should be frightened as such a *mirabile mostro* of an Italian, especially as the day he was let out of *segreto*, and was a *largee* in prison, he gave a feast to all his fellow-prisoners, hiring chandeliers and plate! But poor Antonio, the Guiccioli's servant, the meekest-hearted fellow in the world, is kept in *segreto*; not found guilty, but punished as such,—*e chi sa* when he will be let out?—so rests the affair.

About a month ago Clare came to visit us at Pisa, and went with the Williams' to find a house in the Gulf of Spezzia, when, during her absence, the disastrous news came of the death of Allegra.<sup>2</sup> She died of a typhus fever, which had been raging in the Romagna; but no one wrote to say it was there. She had no friends except the nuns of the Convent, who were kind to her, I believe; but you know Italians. If half of the Convent had died of the plague, they would never have written to have had her removed, and so the poor child fell a sacrifice. Lord Byron felt the loss at first bitterly; he also felt remorse, for he felt that he had acted against everybody's counsels and wishes, and death had stamped with truth the many and often-urged prophecies of Clare, that the air of the Romagna, joined to the ignorance of the Italians, would prove fatal to her. Shelley wished to conceal the fatal news from her as long as possible, so when she returned from Spezzia he resolved to remove thither without delay, with so little delay that he packed me off with Clare and Percy the very next day. She wished to return to Florence, but he persuaded her to accompany me; the next day he packed up our goods and chattels, for a furnished house was not to be found in this part of the world, and, like a torrent hurrying everything in its course, he persuaded the Williams' to do the

<sup>2</sup> Claire arrived in Pisa on April 15. On Tuesday, April 23, she and the Williamses went to Spezia to look for a house. Later, on the same day, news came of the death of Allegra on April 19 at the convent at Bagnacavallo of typhus fever. Claire and her companions returned to Pisa on April 25. Shelley, wishing to delay telling Claire of the death of her child (probably because of the proximity of Byron) sent her back again to Spezia on the same day (twenty-fifth), this time accompanied by Mary, little Percy, and Trelawny. They arrived at Spezia on the twenty-seventh; on the twenty-eighth Trelawny left them. On the thirtieth the Shelleys got into Casa Magni, near Lerici, the only house available. Shelley and Williams had hurriedly packed up the household goods and had brought them by boat to Lerici. On Friday, May 3, the Williamses, unable to find a separate house for themselves, moved into Casa Magni with the Shelleys. On the day before this (May 2) Shelley had told Claire of the death of Allegra. On May 21 Claire left to return to Florence.

same. They came here; but one house was to be found for us all; it is beautifully situated on the sea-shore, under the woody hills,—but such a place as this is! The poverty of the people is beyond anything, yet they do not appear unhappy, but go on in dirty content, or contended dirt, while we find it hard work to purvey miles around for a few eatables. We were in wretched discomfort at first, but now are in a kind of disorderly order, living from day to day—as we can. After the first day or two Clare insisted on returning to Florence, so Shelley was obliged to disclose the truth. You may judge of what was her first burst of grief and despair; however she reconciled herself to her fate sooner than we expected; and although, of course, until she form new ties, she will always grieve, yet she is now tranquil—more tranquil than when prophesying her disaster; she was for ever forming plans for getting her child from a place she judged but too truly would be fatal to her. She has now returned to Florence, and I do not know whether she will join us again. Our colony is much smaller than we expected, which we consider a benefit. Lord Byron remains with his train at Montenero. Trelawny is to be the commander of his vessel, and of course will be at Leghorn. He is at present at Genoa, awaiting the finishing of this boat. Shelley's boat<sup>3</sup> is a beautiful creature; Henry would admire her greatly; though only 24 feet by 8 feet she is a perfect little ship, and looks twice her size. She had one fault, she was to have been built in partnership with

<sup>3</sup> Dowden's misinterpretation of this part of Mary's letter has led to the almost universal opinion that Shelley's boat was named the *Ariel*. The fact is that it never bore that name at all, but was from first to last called *Don Juan*. Since the error is so common, and since it bears on Shelley's relationship with Byron, I think it worthwhile to reproduce here the greater part of my letter ("Shelley's Boat") to the London *Times Literary Supplement* for January 18, 1936, in which I have, I believe, set the matter straight. It may be well to add that the definite decision to build this boat was reached on January 15, 1822 (see Williams's *Journal*), the day after Trelawny arrived in Pisa; that Trelawny and Williams were originally to be part-owners; and that Trelawny arranged with Captain Daniel Roberts at Genoa to supervise the building of the craft. It was finally delivered at Lerici on May 12.

"The boat was never called *Ariel* until Dowden so named it in his *Life of Shelley*, 1886 (II, 503–504). This means that Mary Shelley, Trelawny, Peacock, Medwin, and Lady Shelley either gave the boat no name at all or called it *Don Juan*. If the boat had been rechristened the *Ariel*, Mary Shelley, Trelawny, and Hunt could by no possibility have failed to know it; nor would Trelawny and Hunt have been otherwise than glad to inform the world of this evidence of Shelley's strained feelings towards Byron.

"Edward Williams's *Journal* (p. 59–64) gives an almost daily record of his and Shelley's activities from the day the boat arrived at Lerici on May 12 until it carried them to their death in July. Williams details their three-weeks' struggle to remove 'Don Juan' from the mainsail, and their eventual success on May 30 or 31. But not a word does he say about rechristening the boat as the *Ariel*. Furthermore, he never hints that the name *Don Juan* was objectionable.

"In Shelley's correspondence during this time, Shelley refers freely to the boat and to their difficulties with the sail, but gives not the slightest indication that *Don Juan* is an undesirable name; nor does he say anything about renaming the boat *Ariel*. Several of his letters are addressed to Claire Clairmont and the Gisbornes, who shared his confidences concerning Byron. (See *Letters of Shelley*, 1914, II, 973, 974, 976–77.) In three letters addressed to Trelawny, Shelley specifically called the boat *Don Juan*, and one of these letters was written on June 18, nearly three weeks after the name was removed from the mainsail. (*Ibid.*, II, 966, 968, 980.) Though Byron may not be a reliable witness in this case, it is worth noting that in a letter of October 6, 1822, to Mary Shelley, and in another of November 21, 1822, to Trelawny, he calls the boat *Don Juan*. (*Works of Byron*, ed. Prothero, VI, 119, 142.)

"All this leads to a very simple conclusion: the Shelleys and Williamses were not in the least surprised or angered by discovering that the boat was named *Don Juan*: they had expected that. But they were infuriated by the appearance of that name in large letters across the mainsail.

Williams and Trelawny. Trelawny chose the name of the *Don Juan*, and we acceded; but when Shelley took her entirely on himself we changed the name to the *Ariel*. Lord Byron chose to take fire at this, and determined that she should be called after the Poem; wrote to Roberts to have the name painted on the mainsail, and she arrived thus disfigured. For days and nights, full twenty-one, did Shelley and Edward ponder on her anabaptism, and the washing out the primeval stain. Turpentine, spirits of wine, buccata, all were tried, and it became dappled and no more. At length the piece has been taken out and reefs put, so that the sail does not look worse. I do not know what Lord Byron will say, but Lord and Poet as he is, he could not be allowed to make a coal barge of our boat. As only one house was to be found habitable in this gulf, the Williams' have taken up their abode with us, and their servants and mine quarrel like cats and dogs; and besides, you may imagine how ill a large family agrees with my laziness, when accounts and domestic concerns come to be talked of. *Ma pazienza*. After all the place does not suit me; the people are *rozzi*, and speak a detestable dialect, and yet it is better than any other Italian sea-shore north of Naples. The air is excellent, and you may guess how much better we like it than Leghorn, when, besides, we should have been involved in English society—a thing we longed to get rid of at Pisa. Mr. Gisborne talks of your going to a distant country; pray write to me in time before this takes place, as I want a box from England first, but cannot now exactly name its contents. I am sorry to hear you do not get on, but perhaps Henry will, and make up for all. Percy is well, and Shelley singularly so; this incessant boating does him a great deal of good. I have been very unwell for some time past, but am better now. I have not even heard of the arrival of my novel<sup>4</sup>; but I suppose for his own sake, Papa will dispose of it to the best advantage. If you see it advertised, pray tell me, also its publisher, etc.

That was not the proper place for the name of a beautiful boat; coal barges and such boats might be so disfigured, but not a trim yacht. The name was doubtless painted on the prow too, where it belonged. Shelley and Williams say nothing about removing a name from the prow.

"The story Dowden tells lays impossible charges at the door of Byron and Captain Roberts. Though capable of strange actions, Byron would not have commanded Roberts to name the boat *Don Juan* when the owner had ordered the name *Ariel*; and had he done so, Roberts would have refused.

"What probably happened is this. After taking upon himself the full ownership of the boat, Shelley discussed with Mary whether to retain *Don Juan*, suggested earlier by Trelawny, and assented to by them. They decided to change to *Ariel*. Byron soon learned of this decision, probably through Shelley himself, and made known his strong wish that *Don Juan* should be retained. Rather than cause unnecessary unpleasantness, Shelley apparently agreed not to change the name. Byron then wrote to Roberts of Shelley's decision, and added that he would be much pleased if Roberts would paint the name on the mainsail. It was this piece of interference that the Shelleys so resented and took such vigorous measures to remedy.

"With these facts in mind, we may read in a new light Mary Shelley's letter to Mrs. Gisborne on June 2, 1822, two days after the mainsail had been restored to its pristine purity. It should be noticed that Mrs. Shelley herself says nothing about a rechristening, and that her wrath is occasioned solely by the fact that the name painted on the sail ruined the appearance of the boat and put it in the class of coal barges. Dowden's misinterpretation of the letter was occasioned by its lack of coherence; the 'one fault' is the disfigured mainsail."

See Letters 149 and 152.

<sup>4</sup> *Valperga*, 1823.

We have heard from Hunt the day he was to sail, and anxiously and daily now await his arrival. Shelley will go over to Leghorn to him, and I also, if I can so manage it. We shall be at Pisa next winter, I believe, fate so decrees. Of course you have heard that the lawsuit went against my Father. This was the summit and crown of our spring misfortunes, but he writes in so few words, and in such a manner, that any information that I could get, through any one, would be a great benefit to me. Adieu. Pray write now, and at length. Remember both Shelley and me to Hogg. Did you get *Matilda*<sup>5</sup> from Papa?

Yours ever,

Mary W. Shelley.

[P.S.] Continue to direct to Pisa.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 807-11; Dowden, II, 494, 495, 499, 502n, 504 (quots., 29 lines); Marshall, I, 356-60. TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 140. *To Leigh Hunt*<sup>1</sup>

[Casa Magni, Lerici, c. June 30, 1822.]

My dear Friend—

I know that S[helley] has some idea of persuading you to come here. I am too ill to write the reasonings only let me entreat you let no persuasions induce you to come. Selfish feelings you may be sure do not dictate [to me]—but it w[oul]d be complete madness to come—

I wish I c[oul]d write more—I wish I were with you to assist you— I wish I c[oul]d break my chains & leave this dungeon— adieu— I shall [? hear] about you & Marianne's health from S[helley]—

Your fr[iend]

M.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq. ORIGINAL: Not traced. Owned by the Brick Row Bookshop, New York, about 1927. PRINTED: Lucy M. Rossetti, *Mrs. Shelley*, 157 (misdated); W. E. Peck, *Shelley: His Life and Works* (1927), II, 288. TEXT: From Peck, *Shelley*.

<sup>5</sup> See Letter 132, note 7.

<sup>1</sup> This letter was probably delivered by Shelley himself. Hunt arrived in Leghorn on or about July 1, on which day Shelley and Williams sailed from Lerici in the *Don Juan* in order to greet the Hunts and help them get settled in Pisa. After accomplishing this satisfactorily, Shelley returned to Leghorn on July 7, at night, and sailed with Williams for Lerici on July 8. A squall burst upon the boat out at sea, and Shelley, Williams, and their sailor boy, Charles Vivian, were drowned. The events which followed are too well known to relate. Trelawny's account and Mary's, in her letter of August 14 to Mrs. Gisborne, are our most important sources of information. (See Letter 130, note 3.)

*The Letters of Mary W. Shelley*

PART II : AFTER SHELLEY'S DEATH

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# The Letters of Mary W. Shelley

## PART II : AFTER SHELLEY'S DEATH



### 141. To Miss Amelia Curran\*

Pisa,<sup>1</sup>

July 26th, 1822.

My dear Miss Curran

You will have received my letter concerning the pictures<sup>2</sup> and now I have another request to make. Your kindness to us when we were both so unhappy, your great kindness, makes me do this without that feeling of unwillingness which I have in asking favours of any other person. Besides you are unhappy, and therefore you can better sympathize with and console the miserable.

You w[oul]d greatly oblige me if you w[oul]d get me from one of those shops in the Piazza di Spagna two mosaic stones about as large as [*a circle with a diameter of 1½ inches illustrates the size*]. On one side I wish a heart's ease to be depicted they call these flowers in Italian—Tucera, Nuora or Viola

<sup>1</sup> Mary returned to Pisa on July 20, the day after Trelawny announced that Shelley's body had been found.

<sup>2</sup> While in Rome in the spring of 1819, all the Shelleys had their portraits painted by Miss Curran. Mary's and Claire's journals show that Claire sat for her portrait on May 5 and 6, Shelley for his on May 7 and 8, William for his on May 14, and Mary for hers on May 28. Mary also sat for Signor Delicate on April 6.

A few days after the discovery of Shelley's body, Mary, realizing that she had no picture of Shelley, wrote to Miss Curran and asked for her portrait of Shelley. Receiving no reply, she wrote again on July 26. Miss Curran was then in Paris, where she eventually received this second letter, and replied at once as follows (*Shelley and Mary*, III, 885–86):

Hotel Dusseldorf, Faubourg St. Germain, [Paris],  
October 6, 1822.

My dear Mary,

I hope you will have guessed that your letter did not find me at Rome. The second only has been forwarded, and has not reached me till this moment. You do me justice in feeling that I sympathize with you most sincerely. I fear the time to preach resignation cannot have yet arrived, but you will find the necessity of supporting this cruel blow with as much fortitude as possible for the sake of your little boy, whose loss you must supply; and a glance at [of] mine will speak more than volumes of commonplace efforts at consolation, from which I have myself always shrunk with disgust, and cannot address to you. I am sorry I am not at Rome to execute your melancholy commission. I mean to return in spring, but it may be then too late. I am sure Mr. Brunelli would be happy to oblige you or me, but you may have left Pisa before this, so I know not what to propose. Your picture and Clare's I left with him to give you, when you should be at Rome, as I expected, before you returned to England. The one you now write for I thought was not to be inquired for; it was so ill done, and I was on the point of burning it with others



farfalla Viola regolina—or Viola renagola—on the other (I think I have seen such an one) a view of the tomb of Cestius.<sup>3</sup> I remember also that in one of your rooms there was a view of this place & the people of the house might part with it—or a modern artist at Rome might make one for me which would give me great pleasure— The difficulty is to pay you for these things—but I will take care—as soon (if you have the extreme kindness to fulfill my requests) as I know what money you spend for me I will take care that it shall be remitted to you without delay.

Will you indeed, my dear Miss Curran, do as I ask you—alas these trifles (not the picture that is no trifle) serve as a kind of vent for those sentiments of personal affection & attentions which are so cruelly crushed for ever— In a little poem of his are these words—*pansies let my flowers be* pansies are heartsease—and in another he says that pansies mean memory<sup>4</sup>—so I would

before I left Italy. I luckily saved it just as the fire was scorching it, and it is packed up with my other pictures at Rome; and I have not yet decided where they can be sent to, as there are serious difficulties in the way I had not adverted to. I am very sorry indeed, dear Mary, but you shall have it as soon as I possibly can. I hope you will pass through Paris. I can say no more, as I fear missing the post, and wish to give this scrawl a chance of finding you still at Pisa. God bless you, dearest Mary. Believe me,

Affectionately yours,  
Amc. Curran.

Mary and Miss Curran continued to correspond about the portrait. At length, Miss Curran wrote again (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1062):

Rome, April 19, 1825.

My dearest Mary,

I waited to write to you until I could say that, at last, I had found an opportunity of sending the picture you are so anxious about. I fear it will disappoint you. You condemned it at first, I recollect. If you can get anything done from it that you think better, pray keep the original for me. I should have made another sketch of the head, had I painted since my return. It is enclosed in a small case of pictures to Edgell Wyatt-Edgell, Esq., care of Messrs. Calron, Wine Merchants, St. Mary's Hill, Fenchurch Street, London. If the duty on pictures has not been taken off, as we hear, you will have to pay it. The picture is to be delivered expenses paid; it is the best I could do to forward it to you. The sketch of my little favourite William I could not send you at present, but you shall have it another time, or when you come. I am glad you have a prospect of returning to Italy so soon. . . . I have seen Severn, who is sending you, in a few days, the portrait you wished for. . . .

Ever most truly your affectionate Friend,  
Amelia Curran.

Mary received the portrait on September 17, 1825, two years after she had returned to England. On that day she wrote in her journal (*Marshall*, II, 137–38):

Sept. 17.—Thy picture is come, my only one! Thine those speaking eyes, that mild yet animated look, unlike aught earthly wert thou ever, and art now!

If thou hadst still lived, how different had been my life and feelings!

Thou are near to guard and save me, angelic one! Thy divine glance will be my protection and defence. I was not worthy of thee, and thou hast left me; yet that dear look assures me that thou wert mine, and recalls and narrates to my backward-looking mind a long tale of love and happiness.

My head aches. My heart—my hapless heart—is deluged in bitterness. Great God! if there be any pity for human suffering, tell me what I am to do. I strive to study, I strive to write, but I cannot live without loving and being loved, without sympathy; if this is denied to me, I must die. Would that the hour were come!—(See also Letters 201, note 2; 211, note 1; 215, note 2; 222, note 1.)

<sup>3</sup> That is, Mary wished a locket with Shelley's favorite flower, the pansy, on one side, and the pyramid tomb of Cestius, a very striking object in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome where Shelley's ashes were soon to be buried, on the other. The Tomb of Cestius was and is virtually a symbol of the Cemetery.

make myself a locket to wear in eternal memory with the representation of his flower & with his hair—such things must now do instead of words of love & the dear habit of seeing him daily— Pity me then & indulge me.

In my last letter I was so selfish that I did not ask after your welfare—pray write to me— I must ever be grateful to you for your kindness to us in misfortune & how much more so when through your talents & your goodness I shall possess the only likeness there is of my husband's earthly form.

My little Percy is well—not so beautiful as William—though there is some resemblance

Yours ever truly,  
Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] I would add that several reasons make me entreat you to send these things speedily as I shall soon leave Italy<sup>5</sup>—heat does not agree with my boy—nor w[oul]d I not [*sic*] have risked this summer had not I seen S[helley] getting better & better under the influence of the climate— When I say soon I mean perhaps a month or 6 weeks—before the snows cover the Alps.

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ 64 Via Sistina/ (all'arco della Begina)/ Terzo Piano—Roma. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2) 1 AGOSTO (3) CHAMBERY (4) FPO/AU. 20/1822 (5) 9 SETTEMBRE. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.518–19); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 206–207 (lacks postscript); *Shelley and Mary*, III, 841–42. TEXT: From original letter.

## 142. To Thomas Medwin\*

[Pisa] July 29th 1822

Dear Medwin

At Jane's request I inclose you this letter— Of course the horse is useless to her, nor c[oul]d she keep it in any way nor can she in her state of mind attend to it— If nothing else can be done with it you can sell it to pay its expences—but you will be so kind as to attend to the affair yourself.

I ought to say something more about that which has left us in desolation—but why should I *atrister* you with my despair. I will only mention Jane, since you will be interested & anxious perhaps— She is not well—she does not sleep—but I hope with care she may get better—God knows!—she must have struggles & no one is more unfit for them—no woman had ever more need of a protector—but we shall be together & until she joins either her Mother or Edwards brother who is expected next year I shall be with her. Seven or [*six is crossed out*] weeks ago—just three weeks before this blank moral death visited me I was very ill—near dying<sup>1</sup>—but I have got through it all— I had not been out of the house from illness when Jane & I posted to Leghorn from

<sup>4</sup> *Remembrance*, stanza 3, line 4, and *An Ode Written in 1819* &c., last two lines ("But let not the pansy among them be—Ye are injured, and that means memory"). See also *Adonais*, XXXIII, 1.

<sup>5</sup> She did not leave until July 25, 1823.

<sup>1</sup> On Sunday, June 16, Mary had had a miscarriage.

Lerici<sup>2</sup> to get intelligence of them & without intelligence—without rest we returned—to wait ten days for the confirmation of our sentence of a life of eternal pain— Yet not eternal—I think we are all short lived—but for my child I would take up my abode at Rome—Rome is a good nurse & soon rocks to a quiet grave those who seek death

I scrawl all this nonsense I know not why—I intended to have writtē two words only—but grief makes my mind active & my pen in my hand I run on by instinct I could do so for sheets.

Adieu—I hope you will be happy—

Yours very truly

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] S. & I were united exactly 8 years ag[o] yesterday—on the 4th of August he w[oul]d have been 30— Except that his health was getting better & better I w[oul]d not selfishly desire that his angelic spirit sh[oul]d again inhabit that frame which tormented it—he is alive & often with me now— Every one feels the same, all say that he was an elemental spirit imprisoned here but free & happy now— I am not now—one day I hope to be worthy to join him— My life is chalked out to me—it will be one of study only—except for my poor boy—

The children are in excellent health—

ADDRESS: A Monsieur/ Monsieur Medwin/ Poste Restante/ Genève/ Genève/ Svizzera. POSTMARK: PISA. ORIGINAL: Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, seal. PRINTED: Trelawny's *Recollections*, 175–76. TEXT: From original letter.

### 143. *To Miss Amelia Curran\**

Pisa,

August 14, 1822.

My dear Miss Curran

I have written two letters to you, requesting that favour now nearer my heart than any other earthly thing—the picture of my Shelley.— Perhaps you have been at Gensano & that delays your reply, perhaps you have altered your residence and have not received my letters. I write to you now through the medium of Torlonia<sup>3</sup> to tell you this—the letters were directed 64 Via Sistina<sup>4</sup>—

I am well so is my boy— We leave Italy soon so I am particularly anxious to obtain this treasure, that I am sure you will give me, as soon as possible. I have no other likeness of him—& in so utter a desolation how invaluable to

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 144.

<sup>3</sup> Messrs. Torlonia & Co. were bankers at Rome with whom Shelley transacted business.

<sup>4</sup> Where Miss Curran lived. When in Rome in 1819, the Shelleys had settled at the Palazzo Verospi, 300 Corso; but shortly after meeting Miss Curran, and on the very day Shelley sat to her for his portrait (May 7), they moved, as Claire notes in her diary, to “65 Via Sistina, L’Ultimo Casa sulla Trinita dei Monti.” Mary’s journal reads only, “Change our lodgings.” Dowden and N. I. White do not notice this change of residence.

me is your picture! Will you not send it? Will you not answer me without delay?— Your former kindness bids me hope everything.

Very sincerely yours,

M W Shelley

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.520); A.L.S., 1 p. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 207–208; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 844–45; Marshall, II, 10 (extract, 8 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

#### 144. To Maria Gisborne\*

Pisa August 15th 1822—

I said in a letter to Peacock, my dear Mrs. Gisborne, that I would send you some account of the last miserable months of my disastrous life. From day to day I have put this off, but I will now endeavour to fulfil my design. The scene of my existence is closed & though there be no pleasure in retracing the scenes that have preceded the event which has crushed my hopes yet there seems to be a necessity in doing so, and I obey the impulse that urges me. I wrote to you either at the end of May or the beginning of June. I described to you the place we were living in:—our desolate house, the beauty yet strangeness of the scenery and the delight Shelley took in all this—he never was in better health or spirits than during this time. I was not well in body or mind. My nerves were wound up to the utmost irritation, and the sense of misfortune hung over my spirits. No words can tell you how I hated our house & the country about it. Shelley reproached me for this—his health was good & the place was quite after his own heart— What could I answer—that the people were wild & hateful, that though the country was beautiful yet I liked a more *countryfied* place, that there was great difficulty in living—that all our Tuscans would leave us, & that the very jargon of these *Genovese* was disgusting— This was all I had to say but no words could describe my feelings—the beauty of the woods made me weep & shudder—so vehement was my feeling of dislike that I used to rejoice when the winds & waves permitted me to go out in the boat so that I was not obliged to take my usual walk among tree shaded paths, allies of vine festooned trees—all that before I doated on—and that now weighed on me. My only moments of peace were on board that unhappy boat, when lying down with my head on his knee I shut my eyes & felt the wind & our swift motion alone. My ill health might account for much of this—bathing in the sea somewhat relieved me—but on the 8th of June (I think it was) I was threatened with a miscarriage, & after a week of great ill health on sunday the 16th this took place at eight in the morning. I was so ill that for seven hours I lay nearly lifeless—kept from fainting by brandy, vinegar eau de Cologne &c—at length ice was brought to our solitude—it came before the doctor so Claire & Jane were afraid of using it but Shelley over[r]uled them & by an unsparing application of it I was restored. They all thought & so did I at one time that I was about to die— I hardly wish that I had, my

own Shelley could never have lived without me, the sense of eternal misfortune would have pressed to[o] heavily upon him, & what would have become of my poor babe? My convalescence was slow and during it a strange occurrence happened to retard it. But first I must describe our house to you. The floor on which we lived was thus

5	7	3
6	2	4
1		

length of our house & was precipitous to the sea. 2 the large dining hall—3, a private staircase. 4, my bedroom, 5 Mrs. W[illiam]'s bedroom, 6 Shelley's & 7 the entrance from the great staircase. Now to return. As I said Shelley was at first in perfect health but having over fatigued himself one day, & then the fright my illness gave him caused a return of nervous sensations & visions as bad as in his worst times. I think it was the saturday after my illness [22nd] while yet unable to walk I was confined to my bed—in the middle of the night I was awoke by hearing him scream & come rushing into my room; I was sure that he was asleep & tried to waken him by calling on him, but he continued to scream which inspired me with such a panic that I jumped out of bed & ran across the hall to Mrs. W[illiam]'s room where I fell through weakness, though I was so frightened that I got up again immediately—she let me in & Williams went to S[helley] who had been wakened by my getting out of bed—he said that he had not been asleep & that it was a vision that he saw that had frightened him— But as he declared that he had not screamed it was certainly a dream & no waking vision — What had frightened him was this—He dreamt that lying as he did in bed Edward & Jane came in to him, they were in the most horrible condition, their bodies lacerated—their bones starting through their skin, the faces pale yet stained with blood, they could hardly walk, but Edward was the weakest & Jane was supporting him— Edward said— Get up, Shelley, the sea is flooding the house & it is all coming down." S[helley] got up, he thought, & went to the [*sic*] his window that looked on the terrace & the sea & thought he saw the sea rushing in. Suddenly his vision changed & he saw the figure of himself strangling me, that had made him rush into my room, yet fearful of frightening me he dared not approach [*sic*] the bed, when my jumping out awoke him, or as he phrased it caused his vision to vanish. All this was frightful enough, & talking it over the next morning he told me that he had had many visions lately—he had seen the figure of himself which met him as he walked on the terrace & said to him— "How long do you mean to be content"—no very terrific words & certainly not prophetic of what has occurred.<sup>1</sup> But Shelley had often seen these figures when ill; but the strangest thing is that Mrs. W[illiams] saw him. Now Jane though a woman of sensibility, has not much imagination & is not in the slightest degree nervous—neither in dreams or otherwise. She was standing one day, the day before I was taken ill, at a window that looked on the Terrace with Trelawny—it was

<sup>1</sup> In his *Journal* (page 67) Williams notes vaguely: "Sunday, June 23.—S. sees spirits, and alarms the whole house."

day—she saw as she thought Shelley pass by the window, as he often was then, without a coat or jacket—he passed again—now as he passed both times the same way—and as from the side towards which he went each time there was no way to get back except past the window again (except over a wall twenty feet from the ground) she was struck at seeing him pass twice thus & looked out & seeing him no more she cried— “Good God can Shelley have leapt from the wall? Where can he be gone?” Shelley, said Trelawny—“no Shelley has past— What do you mean?” Trelawny says that she trembled exceedingly when she heard this & it proved indeed that Shelley had never been on the terrace & was far off at the time she saw him. Well we thought [no] more of these things & I slowly got better. Having heard from Hunt that he had sailed from Genoa, on Monday July 1st S[helley], Edward & Captain Roberts (the Gent. who built our boat) departed in our boat for Leghorn to receive him— I was then just better, had begun to crawl from my bedroom to the terrace; but bad spirits succe[e]ded to ill health, and this departure of Shelley’s seemed to add insuff[f]erably to my misery. I could not endure that he should go—I called him back two or three times, & told him that if I did not see him soon I would go to Pisa with the child— I cried bitterly when he went away. They went & Jane, Claire & I remained alone with the children— I could not walk out, & though I gradually gathered strength it was slowly & my ill spirits encreased; in my letters to him I entreated him to return—“the feeling that some misfortune would happen,” I said, “haunted me”: I feared for the child, for the idea of danger connected with him never struck me— When Jane & Claire took their evening walk I used to patrol the terrace, oppressed with wretchedness, yet gazing on the most beautiful scene in the world. This Gulph of Spezia is subdivided into many small bays of which ours was far the most beautiful—the two horns of the bay (so to express myself) were wood covered promontories crowned with castles—at the foot of these on the furthest was Lerici, on the nearest San<sup>t</sup> Arenzo—Lerici being above a mile by land from us & San Arenzo about a hundred or two yards—trees covered the hills that enclosed this bay & then beautiful groups were picturesquely contrasted with the rocks the castle on [and] the town—the sea lay far extended in front while to the west we saw the promontory & islands which formed one of the extreme boundarys of the Gulph—to see the sun set upon this scene, the stars shine & the moon rise was a sight of wondrous beauty, but to me it added only to my wretchedness— I repeated to myself all that another would have said to console me, & told myself the tale of love peace & competence which I enjoyed—but I answered myself by tears—did not my William die? & did I hold my Percy by a firmer tenure?— Yet I thought when he, when my Shelley returns I shall be happy—he will comfort me, if my boy be ill he will restore him & encourage me. I had a letter or two from Shelley mentioning the difficulties he had in establishing the Hunts, & that he was unable to fix the time of his return. Thus a week past.

On Monday 8th Jane had a letter from Edward, dated saturday, he said that he waited at Leghorn for S[helley] who was at Pisa. That S[helley]'s return was certain, "but" he continued, "if he should not come by monday I will come in a felucca, & you may expect me teusday evening at furthest." This was monday, the fatal monday, but with us it was stormy all day & we did not at all suppose that they could put to sea. At twelve at night we had a thunderstorm; Teusday [9th] it rained all day & was calm—the sky wept on their graves—on Wednesday [10th]—the wind was fair from Leghorn & in the evening several felucca's arrived thence—one brought word that they had sailed Monday, but we did not believe them—thursday [11th] was another day of fair wind & when twelve at night came & we did not see the tall sails of the little boat double the promontory before us we began to fear not the truth, but some illness—some disagreeable news for their detention. Jane got so uneasy that she determined to proceed the next day to Leghorn in a boat to see what was the matter—friday [12th] came & with it a heavy sea & bad wind— Jane however resolved to be rowed to Leghorn (since no boat could sail) and busied herself in preparations— I wished her to wait for letters, since friday was letter day—she would not—but the sea detained her, the swell rose so that no boat would venture out— At 12 at noon our letters came—there was one from Hunt to Shelley, it said—"pray write to tell us how you got home, for they say that you had bad weather after you sailed monday & we are anxious"—the paper fell from me—I trembled all over— Jane read it—"Then it is all over!" she said. "No, my dear Jane," I cried, "it is not all over, but this suspense is dreadful—come with me, we will go to Leghorn, we will post to be swift & learn our fate." We crossed to Lerici, despair in our hearts; they raised our spirits there by telling us that no accident had been heard of & that it must have been known &c—but still our fear was great—& without resting we posted to Pisa. It must have been fearful to see us—two poor, wild, aghast creatures driving—(like Matilda)<sup>2</sup> towards the *sea* to learn if we were to be for ever doomed to misery. I knew that Hunt was at Pisa at Lord Byron's house but I thought that L[ord] B[yron] was at Leghorn. I settled that we should drive to Casa Lanfranchi that I should get out & ask the fearful question of Hunt, "Do you know any thing of Shelley?" On entering Pisa the idea of seeing Hunt for the first time for four years under such circumstances, & asking him such a question was so terrific to me that it was with difficulty that I prevented myself from going into convulsions—my struggles were dreadful—they knocked at the door & some one called out "Che è?" it was the Guiccioli's maid. L[ord] B[yron] was in Pisa—Hunt was in bed, so I was to see LB. instead of him. This was a great relief to me; I staggered up stairs—the Guiccioli came to meet me smiling while I could hardly say— "Where is he—Sapete alcuna cosa di Shelley"—They knew

<sup>2</sup> Dowden (II, 526) thinks this is an allusion to an unpublished tale by Mrs. Gisborne, but the story was by Mary. See Letter 132, note 7.

nothing—he had left Pisa on Sunday—on Monday he had sailed—there had been bad weather Monday afternoon—more they knew not. Both L[ord] B[yron] & the lady have told me since—that on that terrific evening I looked more like a ghost than a woman—light seemed to emanate from my features, my face was very white, I looked like marble— Alas. I had risen almost from a bed of sickness for this journey—I had travelled all day—it was now 12 at night—& we, refusing to rest, proceeded to Leghorn—not in despair—no, for then we must have died; but with sufficient hope to keep up the agitation of the spirits which was all my life. It was past two in the morning [13th] when we arrived— They took us to the wrong inn—neither Trelawny or Cap<sup>n</sup> Roberts were there nor did we exactly know where they were so we were obliged to wait until daylight. We threw ourselves drest on our beds & slept a little but at 6 o'clock we went to one or two inns to ask for one or the other of these gentlemen. We found Roberts at the Globe. He came down to us with a face which seemed to tell us that the worst was true, and here we learned all that occurred during the week they had been absent from us, & under what circumstances they had departed on their return. — Shelley had past most of the time a[t] Pisa—arranging the affairs of the Hunts—& skrewing L[ord] B[yron]'s mind to the sticking place about the journal. He had found this a difficult task at first but at length he had succeeded to his heart's content with both points. Mrs. Mason said that she saw him in better health and spirits than she had ever known him, when he took leave of her Sunday July 7th His face burnt by the sun, & his heart light that he had succeeded in rendering the Hunts' tolerably comfortable. Edward had remained at Leghorn. On Monday July 8th during the morning they were employed in buying many things—eatables &c for our solitude. There had been a thunderstorm early but about noon the weather was fine & the wind right fair for Lerici—They were impatient to be gone. Roberts said, "Stay until tomorrow to see if the weather is settled; & S[helley] might have staid but Edward was in so great an anxiety to reach home—saying they would get there in seven hours with that wind—that they sailed! S[helley] being in one of those extravagant fits of good spirits in which you have sometimes seen him. Roberts went out to the end of the mole & watched them out of sight—they sailed at one & went off at the rate of about 7 knots— About three—Roberts, who was still on the mole—saw wind coming from the Gulph—or rather what the Italians call a *temporale*—anxious to know how the boat w[oul]d weather the storm, he got leave to go up the tower & with the glass discovered them about ten miles out at sea, off Via Reggio, they were taking in their topsails—"The haze of the storm," he said, "hid them from me & I saw them no more—when the storm cleared I looked again fancying that I should see them on their return to us—but there was no boat on the sea."—This then was all we knew, yet we did not despair—they might have been driven over to Corsica & not knowing the coast & [have] Gone god knows where. Reports favoured



this belief—it was even said that they had been seen in the Gulph— We resolved to return with all possible speed— We sent a courier to go from tower to tower along the coast to know if any thing had been seen or found, & at 9 A.M. we quitted Leghorn—stopped but one moment at Pisa & proceeded towards Lerici When at 2 miles from Via Reggio we rode down to that town to know if they knew any thing—here our calamity first began to break on us—a little boat & a water cask had been found five miles off—they had manufactured a *piccolissima lancia* of thin planks stitched by a shoemaker just to let them run on shore without wetting themselves as our boat drew 4 feet [of] water.—the description of that found tallied with this—but then this boat was very cumbersome & in bad weather they might have been easily led to throw it overboard—the cask frightened me most—but the same reason might in some sort be given for that. I must tell you that Jane & I were not now alone—Trelawny accompanied us back to our home. We journied on & reached the Magra about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past ten P.M. I cannot describe to you what I felt in the first moment when, fording this river, I felt the water splash about our wheels—I was suffocated—I gasped for breath—I thought I should have gone into convulsions, & I struggled violently that Jane might not perceive it—looking down the river I saw the two great lights burning at the *foce*— A voice from within me seemed to cry aloud that is his grave. After passing the river I gradually recovered. Arriving at Lerici we [were] obliged to cross our little bay in a boat— San Arenzo was illuminated for a festa— What a scene—the roaring sea—the scirocco wind—the lights of the town towards which we rowed—and our own desolate hearts—that coloured all with a shroud— We landed; nothing had been heard of them. This was saturday July 13. & thus we waited until Thursday July 25 [*error for 18<sup>3</sup>*] thrown about by hope & fear. We sent messengers along the coast towards Genoa & to Via Reggio—nothing had been found more than the *lancetta*; reports were brought us—we hoped—and yet to tell you all the agony we endured during those 12 days would be to make you conceive a universe of pain—each moment intolerable & giving place to one still worse. The people of the country too added to one's discomfort—they are like wild savages—on festas' the men & women & children in different bands—the sexes always separate—pass the whole night in dancing on the sands close to our door running into the sea then back again & screaming all the time one perpetuel air—the most detestable in the world—then the scirocco perpetually blew & the sea for ever moaned their dirge. On thursday 25th [*should be 18th*] Trelawny left us to go to Leghorn to see what was doing or what could be done. On friday [19th] I was very ill but as evening came on I said to Jane—"If any thing had been found on the coast Trelawny would have returned to let us know. He has not returned so I hope."

<sup>8</sup> It is quite evident that Mary's date is one week off. The two bodies had been discovered on the sixteenth (or seventeenth) and eighteenth; Trelawny informed them of the recovery on the nineteenth; and Mary returned to Pisa on the twentieth.—See Dowden, II, 528n.

About 7 o'clock P.M. he did return—all was over—all was quiet now, they had been found washed on shore— Well all this was to be endured.

Well what more have I to say? The next day [20th] we returned to Pisa And here we are still— Days pass away—one after another—& we live thus. We are all together—we shall quit Italy together. Jane must proceed to London—if letters do not alter my views I shall remain in Paris.—Thus we live— Seeing the Hunts now & then. Poor Hunt has suffered terribly as you may guess. Lord Byron is very kind to me & comes with the Guiccioli to see me often.

Today—this day—the sun shining in the sky—they are gone to the desolate sea coast to perform the last offices to their earthly remains.<sup>4</sup> Hunt, L[ord] B[yron] & Trelawny. The quarantine laws would not permit us to remove them sooner—& now only on condition that we burn them to ashes. That I do not dislike— His rest shall be at Rome beside my child<sup>5</sup>—where one day I also shall join them—Adonais is not Keats's it is his own elegy—he bids you there go to Rome.—I have seen the spot where he now lies—the sticks that mark the spot where the sands cover him—he shall not be [burned] there it is too nea[r] Via Reggio— They are now about this fearful office—& I live!

One more circumstance I will mention. As I said he took leave of Mrs. Mason in high spirits on Sunday— “Never,” said she, “did I see him look happier than the last glance I had of his countenance.” On Monday he was lost—on Monday night she dreamt that she was somewhere—she knew not where & he came looking very pale & fearfully melancholy—she said to him— “You look ill, you are tired, sit down & eat.” “No,” he replied, “I shall never eat more; I have not a *soldo* left in the world.”— “Nonsense,” said she, “this is no inn—you need not pay”— “Perhaps, he answered, “it is the worse for that.” Then she awoke & going to sleep again she dreamt that my Percy was dead & she awoke crying bitterly—so bitterly & felt so miserable—that she said to herself— “Why if the little boy should die I should not feel it in this manner.” She wa[s] so struck with these dreams that she mentioned them to her servant the next day—saying she hoped all was well with us.

Well here is my story—the last story I shall have to tell—all that might have been bright in my life is now despoiled— I shall live to improve myself, to take care of my child, & render myself worthy to join him. Soon my weary pilgrimage will begin—I rest now—but soon I must leave Italy—& then—there is an end of all but despair. Adieu I hope you are well & happy. I have an idea that while he was at Pisa that he received a letter from you that I have never seen—so not knowing where to direct I shall send this letter to Peacock — I shall send it open—he may be glad to read it—

Your's ever truly

Mary W S.

<sup>4</sup> Williams's body was cremated on August 15, Shelley's on August 16.

<sup>5</sup> This was not the case. William's body was not found; an adult body was discovered in the place thought to be the child's grave.

[P.S.] I shall probably write to you soon again.

I have left out a material circumstance— A Fishing boat saw them go down— It was about 4 in the afternoon—they saw the boat at mast head, when baffling winds struck the sails they had looked away a moment & looking again the boat was gone— This is thei[r] story but there is little doubt that these men might have saved them, at least Edward who could swim. They c[oul]d not they said get near her—but 3 quarters of an hour after passed over the spot where they had seen her—they protested no wreck of her was visible, but Roberts going on board their boat found several spars belonging to her—perhaps they let them perish to obtain these Trelawny thinks he can get her up, since another fisherman thinks that he has found the spot where she lies, having drifted near shore. T[relawny] does this to know perhaps the cause of her wreck—but I care little about it.<sup>6</sup>

ADDRESSED: [By Mary] Mrs. Gisborne/ [By Peacock] 33 King Street West Bryanstone Square/ London. ENDORSED: (1) [By Peacock] Combe, near Wendover, Bucks; Sept. 2. 1822. T.L.P (2) [By Mrs. Gisborne] Rcd. 3rd Sept. 1822/ Ans./ Mrs. Shelley. POSTMARKS: (1) WENDOVER (2) T/3 SE 3/1822. ORIGINAL: British Museum (T. J. Wise Collection); A.L.S., 10 pp. large 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 845–57; *The Prose Works of P. B. Shelley*, edited by Forman, IV, 326–42; Dowden, II, 514, 515, 518, 522, 523, 524, 525–29 (extracts, 224 lines); Marshall, II, 11–21; *A Shelley Library*, edited by Wise, 11–17. TEXT: From original letter.

## 145. To Maria Gisborne

[Pisa, August (c. 27), 1822]<sup>1</sup>

And so here I am! I continue to exist—to see one day succeed the other; to dread night, but more to dread morning & hail another cheerless day. My boy too is alas! no consolation; when I think how He loved him, the plans we had for his education, his sweet & childish voice strikes me to the heart. Why should he live in this world of pain and anguish? And if he went I should go too & we should all sleep in peace. At times I feel an energy within me to combat with my destiny—but again I sink— I have but one hope for which I live—to render myself worthy to join him—such a feeling sustains one during moments of enthusiasm, but darkness & misery soon overwhelms the mind when all near objects bring agony alone with them. People used to call me lucky in my star You see now how true such a prophecy is— I was fortunate in having fearlessly placed my destiny in the hands of one, who a superior being among men, a bright planetary spirit enshrined in an earthly temple, raised me to the height of happiness—so far am I now happy that I would not change my situation as His widow with that of the most prosperous woman in the world—and surely the time will at length come when I shall be at peace & my brain & heart be no longer alive with unutterable anguish.

<sup>6</sup> For a discussion of the possible cause of the sinking of the *Don Juan*, see Edward J. Trelawny, *Records of Shelley, Byron, and the Author*, A New Edition (London, Pickering and Chatto, 1887), Mary's letter of May 2 [1823] to Mrs. Gisborne (Letter 177), and Dowden, II, 534–36.

<sup>1</sup> Incorrectly dated September 10 in *Shelley and Mary, Memorials*, and Marshall.

I can conceive but of one circumstance that could afford me the semblance of content—that is the being permitted to live where I am now in the same house, in the same state, occupied alone with my child, in collecting His manuscripts—writing his life, and thus to go easily to my grave. But this must not be. Even if circumstances did not compel me to return to England, I would not stay another summer in Italy with my child.— I will at least do my best to render him well & happy—& the idea that my circumstances may at all injure him is [the] fiercest pang my mind endures.

I wrote you a long letter containing a slight sketch of my sufferings. I sent it directed to Peacock at the India House, because an accident led me to fancy that you were no longer in London. I said in that, that on that day (August 15) they had gone to perform the last offices for him—however I erred in this, for on that day those of Edward were alone fulfilled & they returned on the 16th to celebrate Shelley's. I will say nothing of the ceremony since Trelawny has written an account of it to be printed in the forthcoming journal— I will only say that all except his heart<sup>2</sup> (which was unconsumable) was burnt, and that two days ago<sup>3</sup> I went to Leghorn and beheld the small box that contained his earthly dross—that form, those smiles—Great God! no he is not there—he is with me, about me—life of my life & soul of my soul—if his divine spirit did not penetrate mine I could not survive to weep thus.

I will mention the friends I have here that you may form an idea of our situation. Mrs. Williams Claire & I live all together we have one purse

<sup>2</sup> Much controversy has raged about Shelley's heart, and even at the present time Roman tourist guides, pointing to "Cor Cordium" on the tombstone, tell travelers that the heart lies under the stone. That Trelawny did remove the heart and that it was kept by Mary, there can be no doubt; his letters (H. Buxton Forman [ed.], *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny* [London, Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1910], 13, 250, 262), Mary's, Hunt's, and Byron's letters, and other evidence are quite conclusive. After Mary's death Sir Percy and Lady Shelley kept it, and at the death of Sir Percy in 1889 it was placed in his coffin and buried with him in St. Peter's Churchyard at Bournemouth. See "The Real Truth About Shelley's Heart," *My Magazine*, XXIX, No. 285 (November, 1933), 939–43.

Mary and Hunt quarreled over the heart. The following letter by Hunt, written the day after Shelley's cremation, explains itself. It is transcribed from the original in the British Museum (Add. MSS 38, 523, f.68); part of it is printed in Blunden's *Leigh Hunt*, 176.

17 August 1822

Dear Mary,

I am sorry after what I said to you last night, that you should have applied to Lord B. on this subject & in this manner. It is not that my self-love is hurt, for that I could have given up, as I have long [learnt?] to do; but it is my love,—my love for my friend; and for this to make way for the claims of any other love, man's or woman's, I must have great reasons indeed brought me—I do not say it is impossible for such reasons to be brought; but I say that they must be great, unequivocal, & undeniable. In *his* case above all other human beings, no ordinary appearance of rights, even yours, can affect me. With regard to Ld B. he has no right to bestow the heart, & I am sure pretends to none. If he told you that you should have it, it could only have been from his thinking I could more easily part with it than I can. I begged it at the funeral pile; I had it; & his Lordship who happened to be at a distance at the moment, knew nothing of the matter till it was in my possession.— I have my moments of impatience as well as you: and the heart that beat then with a melancholy rapture, beats as violently now, though with a different mixture of feelings.

Your sincere friend,  
Leigh Hunt

<sup>3</sup> Which means that the earliest possible date for this letter is August 19.

& joined in misery we are for the present joined in life. She poor girl, withers like a lily—she lives for her children, but it is a living death. Lord Byron has been [*several words cancelled*] very kind—[*several words cancelled*] but the Guiccioli restrains him perhaps—she being an Italian is capable of being jealous of a living corpse such as I. Of Hunt<sup>4</sup> I will speak when I see you. But the friend to whom we are eternally indebted is Trelawny. I have of course mentioned him in my letter to you—as one who wishes to be considered eccentric but who was noble & generous at bottom. I always thought so even when no fact proved it & Shelley agreed with me, as he always did, or rather I with him. We heard people speak against him on account of his vagaries, we said to one another— “Still we like him—we believe him to be good.” Once even when a whim of his led him to treat me with something like impertinence I forgave him, & have now been well rewarded. In my outline of events, you will see how unasked he returned with Jane & I from Leghorn to Lerici, how he staid with us miserable creatures twelve [*should be five*] days there endeavouring to keep up our spirits—how he left us, on thursday, & finding our misfortune confirmed then without rest returned on friday to us, & again without rest returned with us to Pisa on saturday. These were no common services. Since that he has gone through by himself all the annoyances of dancing attendance on consuls & governors for permissions to fulfill the last duties to those gone, & attending the ceremony himself, all the disagreeable part & all the fatigue fell on him—as Hunt said— “He worked with the meanest and felt with the best.” He is generous to a distressing degree. But after all these benefits towards us what I most thank him for is this. When on that night of agony, that friday night he returned to announce that hope was dead for us—when he had told me that his earthly frame being found, his spirit was no longer to be my guide, protector & companion in this dark world—he did not attempt to console me, that would have been to[o] cruelly useless; but he launched forth into as it were an overflowing & eloquent praise of my divine Shelley—until I almost was happy that I was thus unhappy to be fed by the praise of him, and to dwell on the eulogy that his loss thus drew from his friend.

Of my friends I have only Mrs. Mason to mention. Her coldness has stung me—yet she felt his loss keenly, & would be very glad to serve me—but it is not cold offers of service that one wants—one’s wounded spirit demands a number of nameless & slight but dear attentions that are a balm & wanting them one feels a bitterness which is a painful addition to one’s other sufferings.

God knows what will become of me! My life is now very monotonous as to outward events—yet how diversified by internal feeling— How often in the intensity of grief does one instant seem to fill & embrace the universe. As to the rest, the mechanical spending of my time, of course I have a great deal to do preparing for my journey— I make no visits except one once in

<sup>4</sup> See note 2.

about ten days to Mrs. Mason— I have not seen Hunt this nine days. Trelawny resides chiefly at Leghorn since he is captain of Lord B[yron]'s vessel, the Bolivar, he comes to see us about once a week; & Lord B[yron] visits me about twice a week, accompanied by the Guiccioli. But seeing people is an annoyance which I am happy to be spared. Solitude is my only help & resource; accustomed even when he was with me to spend much of my time alone, I can at those moments forget myself—until some idea, which I think I would communicate to him, occurs & then the yawning & dark gulph again displays itself unshaded by the rainbows which the imagination had formed. Despair, energy, love, despondency & excessive affliction are like clouds, driven across my mind, one by one, until tears blot the scene, & weariness of spirit consigns me to temporary repose.

I shudder with horror when I look on what I have suffered; & when I think of the wild and miserable thoughts that have possessed me, I say to myself "Is it true that I ever felt thus?"—And then I weep in pity of myself. Yet each day adds to the stock of sorrow & death is the only end. I would study, & I hope I shall— I would write—& when I am settled I may— But were it not for the steady hope I entertain of joining him what a mockery all this would be. Without that hope I could not study or write, for fame & usefulness (except as far as regards my child) are nullities to me— Yet I shall be happy if any thing I ever produce may exalt & soften sorrow, as the writings of the divinities of our race have mine. But how can I aspire to that?

The world will surely one day feel what it has lost when this bright child of song deserted her— Is not Adonais his own Elegy—& there does he truly depict the universal woe wh[ich] should overspread all good minds since he has ceased to be [their] fellow labourer in this worldly scene. How lovely does he paint death to be and with what heartfelt sorrow does one repeat that line—"But I am chained to time & cannot thence depart."<sup>5</sup> How long do you think I shall live? as long as my mother? then eleven long years must intervene—I am now on the eve of completing my five & twentieth year—how drearily young for one so lost as I! How young in years for one who lives ages each day in sorrow—think you that those moments are counted in my life as in other people's?—oh no! The day before the sea closed over mine own Shelley he said to Marianne—"If I die tomorrow I have lived to be older than my father, I am ninety years of age." Thus also may I say— The eight years I passed with him was spun out beyond the usual length of a man's life—and what I have suffered since will write years on my brow & intrench them in my heart—surely I am not long for this world—most sure should I be were it not for my boy—but God grant that I may live to make his early years happy.

Well adieu—I have no events to write about & can therefore can [*sic*] only scrawl about my feelings—this letter indeed is only the sequel of my last—

<sup>5</sup> *Adonais*, XXVI, 9.

In that I closed the history of all of event that can interest me. That letter I wish you to send my father—the present one it is best not.

I suppose I shall see you in England some of these days—but I shall write to you again before I quit this place—Be as happy as you can, & hope for better things in the next world—by firm hope you may attain your wishes—Again adieu

Affectionately yours

M W S

[P.S.] Do not write to me again here, or at all until I write again.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 King's Street West/ Bryanstone Square/ Inghilterra London. POSTMARKS: (1) PISA (2, English) FPO/ SE. 10/1822 (3) SE. 10/ 1822N<sup>n</sup>. ENDORSED: Recd. 10th Sept. 1822. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.521–23); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 208–12; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 870–75; Marshall, II, 23–28. (Dated September 10 in all.) TEXT: From original letter.

## 146. To John Parke\*<sup>1</sup>

Pisa, September 7th, 1822

Sir

This letter will be delivered to you conjointly with one from Mr. Dawkins, Secretary to the English Legation at Florence, which will I believe explain to you the circumstances which induce me to trouble you. If there had been a resident Clergyman at Rome,<sup>2</sup> I should have consigned to his care that which I now take the liberty of entrusting to yours. You will receive with this letter a case containing the ashes of my late husband which I wish to be buried at

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Park, though British Consul, resided at Ancona or Civita Vecchio. Mr. Freeborn, wine merchant and commissioner in the Via Condotti, was his consular agent; and it was to him that the ashes were sent. There was considerable delay before the ashes could be buried, and rumors of various sorts circulated in Rome. On January 21 the burial finally took place, the Reverend Richard Burgess, English Chaplain in Rome (1823–36), and the Reverend W. Cook officiating. The usual religious ceremony was thought desirable in order to suppress popular speculation. Present at the burial were General Cockburn, Sir Charles Sykes, Joseph Severn, Seymour Kirkup, Richard Westmacott, Scoles, and Mr. Freeborn. (Dowden, II, 537.)

From Mary's letter of January 7 [1823], to Trelawny (Letter 163), and Hunt's letter of February 3, to Joseph Severn (*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 196–97), it is quite evident that Severn had much to do with making arrangements for the burial. On February 2 Mary wrote in her journal: "On the 21st of January those rites were fulfilled. Shelley! My own beloved! You rest beneath the blue sky of Rome; in that, at least, I am satisfied."—Marshall, II, 64.

Trelawny arrived in Rome late in February and remained there until early in May. Dissatisfied with the position of Shelley's grave, he purchased a plot of ground against the old Roman wall in the New Protestant Cemetery adjoining the Old Cemetery, prepared two graves, and (in March) deposited Shelley's ashes in one, reserving the other for his own. (See *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 37, 48–49, 53–55; his *Records*, 146–48; Mary's letters of January 31, [c. April 15], and May 10, [1823]—(Letters 167, 175, 179). Trelawny's important letter of April 2, only partially printed in Marshall and *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny* (p. 48–49), is given completely in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 930–31. See also W. E. Peck, *Shelley: His Life and Work*, II, 405–406, for a document detailing the expenses of the cremation; and Angeli, *Shelley and His Friends in Italy*, 317–19, for the Reverend Burgess's recollections.)

Various errors are to be found in the several accounts by Burgess, Trelawny, Dowden, and Peck. Dowden and Peck repeat Trelawny's error in calling Mr. Freeborn the British Consul. Burgess and Peck are wrong in intimating or stating that the first burial took place in November, 1822.

<sup>2</sup> Reverend Richard Burgess arrived at Rome in the latter part of November, 1822, to become the resident English Chaplain (1823–36).

the English Burying Ground at Rome. Among the tombs there, you will find one to the memory of our boy, William Shelley, and I wish the ashes I send to be interred if possible in the same grave, or close to it. If there is an English Clergyman at Rome, he will perhaps have the goodness to superintend the interment, if there is not you will be so kind as to see it executed in the most decorous manner the circumstances will permit. Mr. Grant of the House of Grant Pellan & Co at Leghorn has kindly interested himself in removing my difficulties on the present occasion, and has the goodness to authorize me to desire you to draw on his correspondant at Rome, Mr. Freeborn, for money to meet all the expences attendant. I wish also a plain stone to be placed to cover the grave (which you will oblige me by allowing to be *very deep*) inscribed with the same words as those on the brass plate on the case.

I beg you will pardon the liberty I take in thus intruding upon you; but having no friend at Rome, and encouraged by Mr. Dawkins' polite assurances I have ventured to address myself to you, and I assure myself that you will kindly undertake the fulfilment of my melancholy duty.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: John Parke Esq/ Consul to H. B. M. at Rome. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.524-25); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *The Shelley Correspondence in the Bodleian*, 44-45. TEXT: From original letter.

### 147. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Pisa,

September 9th, 1822

... I would say do all in your power to be of use to her [Jane Williams], but to know her is sufficient to make the desire of serving her arise in an unselfish mind. Do what little you can to amuse her.

ORIGINAL: Lord Abinger. PRINTED: (Unpublished) Grylls, *Mary Shelley*, 176-77n (quot., 2 lines). TEXT: Extract from Grylls, *Mary Shelley*.

### 148. To Claire Clairmont\*

Pisa [*error for* Genoa] Sept 15 1822

My dear Claire

I do not wonder that you were & are melancholy—or that the excess of that feeling should oppress you. Great God! What we have gone through—what variety of care and misery, all closed now in blackest night. And I—am I not melancholy?—here in this busy hateful Genoa<sup>1</sup> where nothing speaks to me of him, except the sea, which is his murderer.—Well I shall have his books &

<sup>1</sup> On Wednesday, September 11, Mary, accompanied by Jane, had left Pisa for Genoa, where she was to search for a house for her and the Hunts and for another for Byron. Jane Williams left Genoa for England on September 17, and on September 20 Claire set out from Pisa to go to her brother Charles in Vienna.



manuscripts & in those I shall live & from the study of those I do expect some instants of content. In solitude my imagination & ever moving thoughts may afford me some seconds of exaltation that may render me both happier here & more worthy of him hereafter. Such as I felt walking up a mountain by myself at sunrise during my journey—when the rocks looked black about me & a white mist concealed all but them—I thought then that thinking of him and exciting my mind my days might pass in a kind of peace—but these thoughts are so fleeting—& then I expect unhappiness alone from all the *worldly* part of my life—from my intercourse with human beings—I *know* that that will bring nothing but unhappiness to me. If indeed I except Trelawny who appears so truly generous & kind.

But I will not talk of myself. You have enough to annoy & make you miserable—& in nothing can I assist you. But I do hope that you will find Germany better suited to you in every way than Italy—& that you will make friends—& more than all, become really attached to some one there.

I wish when I was in Pisa that you had said that you thought you should be short of money & I would have left you more—but you seemed to think 150 francesconi plenty— I would not go on with Goethe<sup>2</sup> except with a fixed price per sheet to be regularly paid—& that price not less than five guineas— Make this be understood fully through Hunt before you go & then I will take care that you get the money—but if you [do] not *fix* it, then I cannot manage so well.

You are going to Vienna, how anxiously do I hope to find peace—I do not hope for it here—Genoa has a bad atmosphere for me I fear, & nothing but the horror [*sic*] of being a burthen to my family prevents my accompanying Jane— If I had *any* fixed income I would go at least to Paris—& I shall go the moment I have one. Adieu my dear Claire—write to me often as I shall to you

Affectionately yours

Mary W S.

[P.S.] I cannot get your German dictionary now since I must have packed it in my great case of books—but I will send it by the first opportunity

ORIGINAL: Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, the New York Public Library; A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: By H. B. Forman, *Macmillan's Magazine* (May, 1880), 54–55; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 875–77; Marshall, II, 30–31. TEXT: From original letter.

### 149. *To the Authorities at Via Reggio*<sup>1</sup>

Io, sottoscritta, prego le Autorità di Via Reggio o Livorno di consegnare al Signore Odoardo Trelawny, Inglese, la Barca nominata Il Don Juan,<sup>2</sup> e tutta

<sup>2</sup> For some time Claire had been translating parts of Goethe for Byron. Shelley, who had undertaken to get the translation made, had kept secret Claire's identity as the translator. In order to get money for her journey, Claire had evidently revealed herself to Byron.

<sup>1</sup> This note is printed by Trelawny immediately after Hunt's Latin inscriptions for the graves

la sua carica, appartenente al mio marito, per essere alla sua disposizione.  
 Maria Shelley.

Genova, 16 Sett<sup>bre</sup>, 1822.

[*Translation*: I, the undersigned, pray the authorities of Via Reggio or Leghorn to deliver to Mr. Edward Trelawny, Englishman, the boat named the Don Juan, and all its contents, belonging to my husband, to be at his entire disposal.

Mary Shelley.

Genoa, 16 September, 1822.]

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Trelawny's *Records*, 148. TEXT: From *ibid*.

## 150. To Maria Gisborne

Genoa,

Sept. 17, 1822.

I am here alone in Genoa; quite, quite alone! Jane has left me to proceed to England, & except my sleeping child, I am alone. Since you do not communicate with my father you will perhaps be surprised after my last letter, that I do not come to England. I have written to him a long account of the arguments of *all* my friends to dissuade me from that miserable journey; Jane will detail them to you; & therefore I merely say now, that having no business there (for the will can in no way be acted upon until Sir T.'s death, & an allowance from him can be procured as well in my absence) I have determined not to spend that money which will support me nearly a year here, in a journey the sole end of which appears to me the necessity I should be under, when arrived in London, of being a burthen to my father. After my crowns are gone, if Sir T[imothy] behaves ill, I hope to be able to support myself by my writings & mine own Shelley's Mss. At least during many long months I shall have peace as to money affairs & one evil the less is much to one whose existence is suffering alone. L[ord] B[yron] has a house here & will arrive soon; I have taken a house for Hunt & myself, outside one of the gates<sup>1</sup>—it is large and neat with a *poderè* attached, we shall pay about 80 crowns between us, so I hope that I shall find tranquillity from care this winter, though that may be the last of my life so free. Yet I do not hope it, though I say so; I expect nothing but ill for me—hope is a word that belongs not to my situation; He, my own beloved, the exalted & divine Shelley, has left me alone in this miserable, hateful world;—on this earth which bears grass only that it may perish

of Shelley and Williams, in Hunt's letter of August 1, 1822, to Trelawny, and appears at first glance to be a part of the inscriptions. Trelawny offers no explanation for Mary's note. His first words after Hunt's letter and Mary's note refer to the Latin inscription for Shelley.

<sup>2</sup> This note, together with the letter of October 15 to Jane Williams (Letter 152), proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that Shelley's boat was never renamed the *Ariel*.

<sup>1</sup> At Albaro, a suburban village on a hill one and one-half or two miles from Genoa. The house, Casa Negroto, had forty rooms. Mary also engaged a house for Byron, Casa Saluzzi, a short distance away.

again & again—this earth canopied by the eternal starry heaven—where he is—where, oh my God! yes—where I shall one day be.

Claire goes to Vienna to Charles—she is no longer with me. Jane quitted me this morning at four. After she left me I again went to rest & thought of Pugnano,<sup>2</sup> its halls, its cypresses—the perfume of its mountains & the gaiety of our life beneath their shadow. Then I dozed awhile and in my dream saw dear Edward mostly visibly; he came, he said, to pass a few hours with us, but could not stay long. Then I woke & the day began. I went out—took Hunt's house—but as I walked I felt that which is with me the sign of unutterable grief. I am not given to tears; & though my most miserable fate has often turned my eyes to fountains—yet oftener I suffer agonies unassuaged by tears. But during these last sufferings I have felt an oppression at my heart I never felt before— It is not a palpitation but a *stringimento* which is quite convulsive & did I not struggle greatly would cause violent hysterics— Looking on the sea or hearing it's roar—his dirge, it comes upon me. But these are corporeal sufferings that I can get over, but that which is insurmountable is the constant feeling of despair that shadows me; I seem to walk on a narrow, dark path with fathomless precipices all around me. Yet where can I fall? I have already fallen, and all that comes of bad or good is a mere mockery.

Those about me have no idea of what I suffer; for I talk, ay & smile as usual—& none are sufficiently interested in me to observe that though my lips smile, my eyes are blank, or to notice the desolate look that I cast up towards the sky in anger—that I have smiled. And if I talk not to those about me of my sufferings why should I make you unhappy with an account of them? Pardon, dear friend, this selfishness. There are moments when the heart must *sfogare* or be suffocated; & such a moment is this—when quite alone, my babe sleeping, my dear Jane having just left me, it is with difficulty I prevent myself from flying from mental misery by bodily exertion—when to destroy everything around [me] & to run into that vast grave (the sea) until fatigued I sunk to rest would be a pleasure to me. And instead of this I write, & as I write I say Oh God! have pity on me!—At least I will have pity on you. Good night—I will finish this letter when people are about me & I am in a more cheerful mood— Goodnight— I will go look at the stars, they are eternal; so is he—so am I.

September 20th. You have not written to me since my misfortune. That is to say since Mrs. G.'s first short letter. I understand this; you first waited for a letter from me & that letter told you not to write. But answer this as soon as you receive it; talk to me of yourselves—and also of my *English* affairs. I am afraid that they will not go on very well in my absence, but it w[oul]d cost more to set them right than they are worth. I will however let you know what I think that my friends *ought* to do, that when you talk to Peacock he

<sup>2</sup> Where the Williamsses lived, near the Baths of Pisa, in the summer of 1821 when their real intimacy with the Shelleys began.

may learn what I wish. The will cannot be acted upon until Sir Timothy's death, & I am convinced that it is for my interest that nothing should be said about it until then—but that a claim should be made on the part of Shelley's executors for a maintenance for my child & myself from Sir T[imothy]. L[ord] B[yron] is ready to do this or any other service for me that his office of executor demands from him. But I do not wish it to be done separately by him, and I wait to hear from England before I ask him to write to Whitton on the subject. He will write the moment I ask him. Secondly Ollier ought to be looked to—all Mss. taken from him, and some plan be reflected on for the best manner [of] republishing S[helley]'s works as well as the writings he has left b[ehind]. Who will allow money to Ianthe & Charles?<sup>3</sup>—

As for you, my dear friends, I do not see what you can do for [me] except to send me the originals or copies of Shelley's most interesting letters to you. I have given Jane a list of the things I wish her to get me—she will bring them to you, I shall write to Peacock & my father for what other [things] I wish to be sent out to me, & you who see Peacock will arrange the sending them together with the things Jane gets for me. If Jane has any money left of mine I wish you would get painted on velvet for me two things. I wish each piece of velvet to be the size of this page of paper [a quarto sheet]. On one I wish a pansy (that is heart's ease—not a single flower but a plant) the natural size to be painted & under it to be written these words— "The Pansy let my flower be!" on the other let a shell be painted of the kind on S[helley]'s arms—in this shape [*a curled shell is drawn to illustrate*] I can not draw it—the shoulder of mutton shape—but let it be the copy of a large & beautiful Indian shell. round it thus [*a drawing illustrates*] let it be written those words of Ariel in the Tempest— "We will all suffer a sea change"—& in a strait line under—"But I am chained to time & cannot thence depart."<sup>4</sup> Perhaps Mrs. Fielding can do these—you know they must not cost much though I wish them to be well done—but I believe painting on velvet is not dear.

My Percy is well—he is a very good boy which is [a] great consolation to me. I hope soon to get into my house with Hunt, where writing, copying S[helley]'s Mss. walking & being of some use in the education of Marianne's children will be my occupations. Hunt was to depart from Pisa either yesterday or will depart tomorrow—if Marianne be not ill he will arrive in [?]4 days—his furniture will be sent the day of his departure & will come in 2—so in the beginning of next week I hope to settle myself.<sup>5</sup>—Here is a long letter

<sup>3</sup> Shelley's children by Harriet Westbrook, for whose maintenance Shelley had been paying £200 a year.

<sup>4</sup> *The Tempest*, I, ii: "Nothing of him that doth fade/ But doth suffer a sea-change."—*Adonais*, XXVI, 9.

<sup>5</sup> Byron arrived in Genoa by October 6, on which date he wrote to Mary that the Hunts were "coming slowly up."—Rowland E. Prothero (ed.), *The Works of Lord Byron, Letters and Journals* (London, John Murray, 1898, 6 vols.), VI, 120. Interesting accounts of the journey to Genoa are to be found in Byron's *Letters and Journals* (VI, 121), and in *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt* (I, 191–92) and Hunt's *Autobiography* (chapter 20).

all about myself—but though I cannot write I like to hear of others, so tell me all your plans— All that I do not inform you of myself Jane can explain when you see her. Adieu, dear friends,

Your since[re]ly attached  
Mary W S.

[P.S.] Where is that letter in verse S[helley] once wrote to you?<sup>7</sup> let me have a copy of it. Since writing this, I have thought that there is one thing you might do for me better than any one else—that is Mr. G.[isborne] but let him judge. I have Shelley's perfect translation of the 'Theologico Potical [*sic*] tract of Spinoza<sup>7</sup>—perhaps you c[oul]d dispose of this for me to some Bookseller—Longman or some one else.

Is not Peacock very lukewarm & insensible in this affair?—Tell me what Hogg says & does—& my father also if you have an opportunity of knowing.

[*At top of p. 1*] That miserable boat has been found & drawn up from the bottom of the sea with everything in her.<sup>8</sup> She did not upset, but filled & went down. S[helley] certainly did not suffer except one pang which thank God we must all feel. But Jane will instruct you in every particular. She will call on you on her arrival.

[*Two more drawings of shells*] That is more the shell's shape.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 King's St. West/ Bryanstone Square/ Inghilterra London. POSTMARKS: (1) GENOVA (2, English) FPO/ OC. 3/ 1822 (3) 12 o'Clock/ OC. 3/ 1822<sup>N</sup>. ENDORSED: Recd. 3rd Oct. Ansd. 8th Oct. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.527–28); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 212–14; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 877–80; Marshall, II, 32–34 (all quite incomplete); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 365–68. TEXT: From original letter.

## 151. To Thomas Love Peacock

Genoa,

Sept. 29th, 1822.

... I have written you a letter entirely about business. When I hold my pen in my hand, my natural impulse is to express the feelings that overwhelm me; but resisting that impulse, I dare not for a moment stray from my subject, or I should never find it again. ... Alas, find in the whole world so transcend-

<sup>6</sup> The *Letter to Maria Gisborne*, written in the summer of 1820 while the Shelleys were occupying the Gisbornes' house (Casa Ricci) in Leghorn. On February 12, 1823, Mrs. Gisborne wrote that "The poetical letter was immediately transcribed and put into the hands of Peacock."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 928.

<sup>7</sup> See Letter 89, note 1. The translation has never been published.

<sup>8</sup> As Dr. Guido Biagi, with documentary evidence, shows, the *Don Juan* was found and raised by two fishing smacks belonging to Sig. Stephano Baroni on September 11 (?) and brought into Via Reggio on the twelfth (*Last Days of Shelley*, 1898, 142–43). Trelawny's *Records* (177–78) and Captain Roberts's two letters printed therein would lead one to think that Roberts found and raised the boat. The *Don Juan* was sold at auction on Monday, September 16, (apparently to Roberts himself), and brought "a trifle more than two hundred dollars," half of which was given to the crews of the fishing boats which raised her. Mary's opinion in this letter (that "she did not upset, but filled & went down") was that expressed in Roberts's first letter. Roberts changed his opinion in his letter of September 18, and Mary later adopted this revised opinion, that the *Don Juan* was run down by a felucca.

ent a being as mine own Shelley, and then tell me to be consoled! And it is not he alone I have lost, though that misery, swallowing up all others, has hitherto made me forgetful of all others. My best friend, my dear Edward, whom next to S[helley] I loved, and whose virtues were worthy of the warmest affection, he too is gone! Jane, driven by her cruel fate to England, has also deserted me. What have I left? Not one that can console me; not one that does not show by comparison how deep and irremediable my losses are. Trelawny is the only quite disinterested friend I have here—the only one who clings to the memory of my loved ones as I do myself; but he, alas, is not as one of them, though he is really good and kind. Adieu, my dear Peacock; be happy with your wife and child. I hear that the first is deserving of every happiness, and the second a most interesting little creature.<sup>9</sup> I am glad to hear this. Desolate as I am, I cling to the idea that some of my friends at least are not like me. Again, adieu.

Your attached friend,  
Mary W. Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: By Peacock in *Fraser's Magazine* (March, 1860); in Peacock's *Memoirs of Shelley*, edited by Brett-Smith, 214–15. TEXT: From Peacock's *Memoirs of Shelley*, edited by Brett-Smith.

## 152. To Jane Williams

Genoa, October 15, 1822.

I have copied for him [Byron] the 10th Canto of *Don Juan*.<sup>1</sup> It is not in his fine style. . . . The *Don Juan*<sup>2</sup> was found her topsails down and her other sails fast. Trelawny tells me that in his, Roberts' & every other sailor's opinion that she was *run down*; of course by that fishing boat. . . . It may add a most bitter pang to know that they might have been saved. . . . My little Percy is well and good.

ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. Sold at Sotheby's, Monday, April 8, 1935, to Maggs Brothers for £360, as item 210 from the Estate of the late Mrs. Beryl Dodgson, who, jointly with her sister, inherited the property of their father, the late Colonel C. Shelley Leigh-Hunt, grandson of J. H. Leigh Hunt. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Extract from auction sale catalogue.

## 153. To Lord Byron\*

[Genoa] Monday [ ? October 21, 1822 ]

My dear Lord Byron

The letters that I received today were from Jane, Claire & Mrs. Gisborne, nothing about *business* in any of them; indeed I do not expect to hear from my father before the expiration of a week. Mrs. Gisborne saw him; she says—"I saw him alone, we spoke of you & of the ever to be lamented catastrophe

<sup>9</sup> Peacock married Jane Gryffydd on March 22, 1820; his first child, Mary Ellen, was born in July, 1821.

<sup>1</sup> Published on August 29, 1823, along with Cantos IX and XI.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 139, note 3, and Letter 149.

without any expression or outward sign of sorrow. I thought that he had erred in his memorable assertion & that we human beings really were stocks & stones. When Peacock called upon me a tear did force itself into my eye in spite of all my struggles."<sup>1</sup>

—But I do not write to your Lordship to tell you this, but to mention another subject in her letter. She says— "When Mr. Gisborne went to Harrow, to accompany a son of Mr. Clementis' who is placed in the Harrow school, he saw the grave of poor Allegra. This was precisely the day your father called on me, the funeral had taken place the day preceding. There was a great outcry among the ultra purists on the occasion, and at the time they seemed resolved that the inscription intended by her father, should not be placed in the church. These Gentlemen would willingly cast an eternal veil over King David's infirmities & their own, but the world will peep through, even though poor Allegra should be without the honours of her inscription."<sup>2</sup>

Would you tell me the Book, Chapter, & verse of this quotation for the Epitaph.

I send your Lordship two letters from Hunt—he says that—"there appears some mistake about the Preface to the "Vision," but he hopes the *realizations* on the 7,000 will compensate for all defects"<sup>3</sup>—

Jane writes from Paris—she has been very ill, but intends proceeding to England without delay. She desires to be remembered to you & begs me to remind you of your promise of bidding Murray send her your works.

This then is all my news.—Teresa's visit caused me to be out yesterday when you called, otherwise I am always at home at that hour & when you feel inclined to prolong your ride to this house you will be sure to find me.

I have nearly finished copying your *savage* Canto<sup>4</sup>— You will cause Milman to hang himself—"non c'è altro rimedio"— I was much pleased with your notice of Keats—your fashionable world is delightful—& your *dove*—you mention eight years—exactly the eight years that comprizes all my years of happiness— Where also is he, who gone has made this quite, quite another earth from that which it was?—There might be [have been] something sunny about me then, now I am truly *cold moonshine*.<sup>5</sup> Adieu,

Truly yours  
Mary Shelley

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Gisborne's letter, dated October 8, is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, III, 887–92.

<sup>2</sup> Allegra was buried near the entrance to Harrow Church, but no memorial tablet or monument was ever erected. Byron wished this inscription to be put on a tablet in the church: "In Memory of/ Allegra,/ daughter of G. G. Lord Byron,/ who died at Bagnacavallo,/ in Italy, April 20th, 1822,/ aged five years and three months./ 'I shall go to her, but she shall not return to me.' 2d Samuel, xii. 23."—Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 70–72.

<sup>3</sup> Byron's "Vision of Judgment" was published on October 15, 1822, in the first number of *The Liberal*, but without the preface, with which Byron had taken particular pains. John Murray had failed to give the preface to John Hunt. See Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 126–29.

<sup>4</sup> *Don Juan*, Canto XI, published on August 29, 1823, with Cantos IX and X. Stanza 59 is on Keats, whose "fiery particle" was "snuff'd out by an article." Stanzas 64–74 treat of the fashionable world, and Stanza 75, one of the *dove* (where) stanzas, mentions the eight years.

<sup>5</sup> One of the only two references I know of to her identification with the "cold chaste moon"

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 269-71. TEXT: From original letter.

154. *To Lord Byron*

[Albaro] Wednesday [c. October 30, 1822]

[*Summary*] Mary had asked Hunt to show Byron Peacock's letter, so that Byron could see that in complying with her request "the other day" he did that which everyone considers the best thing "in the present state of my affairs."<sup>6</sup>

Byron had sent Mary some of his "drama" [*The Deformed Transformed*] to copy; this was an agreeable task.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 1 p. (4 x 5 inches), addressed, seal. UN-PRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. SUMMARY: From original letter.

155. *To Maria Gisborne\**

Albaro,  
Nov. 6th, 1822.

This, my dear Friend, will I believe only be an excuse for a letter; I have determined to write every day since I received yours, but yet I have never been able to prevail on myself so to do— First I have been occupied by writing an article for the *Liberal*—& then I have been out of spirits—out of all desire to exert myself— I write now more for business than aught else—

I have not heard of Jane's arrival in England & am very anxious—I fear she is ill—for she wrote from Paris as if she were ill— I have heard from Miss Curran who is at Paris<sup>1</sup>— My own Shelley's picture is at Rome, so nothing can be done about that. As soon as Jane writes to me—I shall see about her getting the money for my other commissions—and then pray send the things I asked for as quickly as possible.

Peacock says that he has got Shelleys "Defence of Poetry." I wish him to send it to Mr. John Hunt at the Examiner office<sup>2</sup>— Will you let him know that.

I am well—but very nervous— My poor child is quite well— My ex-  
of *Epipsychidion* (line 281). The other is in her journal for October 5, 1822, where she wrote: "Well, I shall commence my task, commemorate the virtues of the only creature worth loving or living for, and then, maybe, I may join him. Moonshine may be united to her planet, and wander no more, a sad reflection of all she loved on earth."—*Shelley Memorials*, 232-33. The *Epipsychidion* was a very distasteful poem to Mary; she makes no reference to it in her published Notes. The two passages above are indicative of the remorse which at this time she suffered for not making Shelley as happy as she might have made him.

<sup>6</sup> Peacock had written on October 18: "Your Father has communicated to you his opinion that a personal application from Lord Byron's solicitor to Whittton on the subject of a permanent provision for you and your child will be the most advisable course, and he thinks that the application for the September quarter should be made at the same time and in the same manner. In this opinion I entirely concur."—*Shelley and Mary*, III, 892-93.

Byron had written to his solicitor John Hanson on October 23, giving just such instructions as Peacock says Godwin had advised. (Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 127-28.)

<sup>1</sup>See Letter 141, note 2.

<sup>2</sup>It was intended to publish "The Defence of Poetry" in *The Liberal*, but publication was not effected until 1840, when Mary published it in Shelley's *Essays*, &c.



cessive nervousness (how new a disorder for me—my illness in the summer is the foundation of it) is the cause I do not write—and even now that I do I am in a state of excessive irritation. Well forgive me—I will seize my first *best* moment to scribble to better purpose than this scrawl—let me have long & frequent letters from you I pray.

I asked Jane to get for me but if she be not arrived pray do you get & send in your next letter, a drawing of Shelley's crest that I may get it engraved on a seal—do not confound the two baronages Sir John & Sir Timothy—pray do this as it will be very easy to get a book with the Baronage—the *crest* is all I want—but let it be well drawn that the people here may understand it—

I live as comfortably as I can— I do not wish for any change—except that I do not like Genoa *ma pocca mi cale*— I am so thankful to Lord B[yron] that he prevented my journey to England how miserable I should have been there— We have here the most divine Italian skies—having first had a *meteora cioè a rovina d'Acqua*—that forced all the torrents from their beds & did infinite *guasto* near us—but we are at the top of the [h]ill & so did not suffer. Houses were thrown down & many walls—which is good—for the type of Genoa is a lane 10 feet wide between 2 stone walls each 20 feet high.<sup>3</sup> There is one pretty walk— Mrs. Hunt is not I [suppose] worse than the season renders reasonable that she should be—

This as I said is only an excuse for a letter— I write principally that Mr. John Hunt may get the defence of poetry & that you may hear that I am well—so adieu— If I could get over the intense hatred I feel to every thing I think, do, or see I might get on—but day after day I long only more & more to go where all I love are save my poor boy who chains me here— Adieu

Affectionately yours,

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] Will you add to the things sent out to me a bottle of lavender water?

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 Kings Street West/ Bryanstone Square/ Inghilterra London. POSTMARKS: (1) GENOVA (2, English) FPO/ NO. 23/ 1822 (3) 12 o'Clock/ No. 23/ 1822N<sup>th</sup>. ENDORSED: Recd. 23rd Nov. 1822. ANS. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.529–30); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, III, 895–96; Marshall, II, 50 (quot., 4 lines); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 368–69. TEXT: From original letter.

## 156. To Lord Byron\*<sup>1</sup>

[Albaro] Saturday Morning [? November 9, 1822]

I am induced to say a few words to your Lordship on this affair of Hunt's. I wish indeed that I could *say* them, as these things are always better said;

<sup>3</sup> Byron gives a much livelier account of the storm in his letter of November 7 to Augusta Leigh (*Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 135).

<sup>1</sup> On October 9, 1822, Byron, much dissatisfied with the Hunts and the prospects for *The Liberal*, wrote to Murray: "I am afraid the Journal is a *bad* business, and won't do; but in it I am sacrificing *myself* for others—I can have no advantage in it. I believe the *brothers* H. to be honest men; I am sure that they are poor ones. They have not a rap: they pressed me to engage in this

but I will not venture on a second intrusion & dare not inflict upon you the pain of paying me a visit. Hunt did not send those letters to his nephew that he sent for you to read, and this delay has made him reflect. Indeed, my dear Lord Byron, he thinks much of this & takes it much to heart. When he reflects that his *bread* depends upon the success of this Journal, & that you depreciate it in those circles where much harm can be done to it; that you depreciate him as a coadjutor, making it his [*sic*; ?thus] appear (pardon the quotation) that his poverty & not your will consents<sup>2</sup>—all this dispirits him greatly. He thinks that an explanation would come ungracefully from him, but that it would come gracefully from you. He is very much vexed that his nephew noticed these reports, but they are noticed, Murray may publish, or give free circulation to your letter, and that places him in a kind of degrading point of view. For “his sick wife & six children” are alledged—not your friendship for him. He said this evening that he thought of writing to you about this, but I offered to write instead, to spare him a painful task. He does not see my letter.

Consider that however Moore may laugh at Rimini-pimini, that Hunt is a very good man. Shelley was greatly attached to him on account of his integrity, & that really your letter *does* place him in an awkward situation. The Journal is now a work of charity—a kind of subscription for Hunt’s family—this must hurt the work. Do not you then think that a few words from you in explanation or excuse such as could appear, are due to your literary companionship with him? It would be a goodnatured thing—and a prudent thing—since you would stop effectually the impertinence of Murray, by shewing him that he has no power to make you quarrel with your friend, & that you do not fear his treason.

It is a painful thing to me to put forward my own opinion. I have been so

work, and in an evil hour I consented: still I shall not repent, if I can do them the least service. I have done all I can for Leigh Hunt since he came here; but it is almost useless: his wife is ill, his six children not very tractable, and in the affairs of this world he himself is a child. The death of Shelley left them totally aground; and I could not see them in such a state without using the common feelings of humanity, and what means were in my power, to set them afloat again.”—Byron’s *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 122–25.

Indiscreetly, Murray circulated the letter, and it came to the knowledge of John Hunt and his son Henry, who communicated the fact to Leigh Hunt, who was deeply hurt. This letter is Mary’s attempt to patch up the quarrel. Henry Hunt had evidently definite intentions of noticing Byron’s letter in print.

Byron’s reply to Mary’s letter is partially printed by Prothero (*Ibid.*, VI, 174–75). He seems to have written at once, and Mary to have answered on the same day. Byron evidently made an amiable gesture, for Hunt’s ruffled feelings were sufficiently soothed for him to write his nephew Henry Hunt on November 14: “Thank you for the zeal with which you thought it necessary to take notice of the gossip you speak of; but do not trouble yourself about it another time. If one person, violating the confidence of a splenetic moment of Lord Byron’s, endeavours to turn one or two idle phrases of his to our injury (the epithets his lordship himself makes use of), persons of respectability could give an account, if they pleased, of twenty speeches from the same quarter to very different purpose. . . . This is quite as much Lord Byron’s opinion as my own.”—*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 203–204. Hunt repeats the same thoughts more concisely in his letter of November 22 to Bessy Kent (*Ibid.*, I, 200). Byron reprimanded Murray for circulating his letter, when he wrote on December 25 (*Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 156–57).

<sup>2</sup> *Romeo and Juliet*, V., i., 75: “*Apothecary*. My poverty, but not my will, consents.”

long accustomed to have another act for me; but my years of apprenticeship must begin. If I am awkward at first, forgive me. I would, like a dormouse, roll myself in cotton at the bottom of my cage, & never peep out. But I see Hunt annoyed in every way. Let us pass over his vanity. What if that has been pampered—little else about him has—and qualms have visited him even upon that tender point. But here even the independance of his character is in some measure [at] stake.—Besides the success of his Journal—and consequently his very existence. So I would fain do a little to make him easy again. You asked me the other evening, why I had not sent you a note about it; I do so now. So do not think me impertinent; if you do not know that I am timid, yet I am so;—it is a great effort to me to intrude with my writing upon you. But if I can make Hunt have less painful feelings by inducing you to soften the effect that your letter must have had in London, why for that I will even risk being impertinent.

I have copied your MSS.<sup>3</sup> The "Eternal Scoffer" seems a favourite of yours. The Critics, as they used to make you a Childe Harold, Giaour, & Lara all in one, will now make a compound of Satan & Cæsar to [? serve as (*MS torn*)] your prototype, & your 600 firebrands in Murray's hands will [*word or two missing; MS torn*] costume. I delight in your new style more than in your former *glorious one*, & shall be much pleased when your fertile brain gives my fingers more work.

Any news of Douglas Kinnaird? May I ask you to answer this letter soon as Hunt's letters for England will not be written until it arrives, & really another post ought not to be lost.

Again I beg your Lordship to excuse my annoying you—

Truly Yours

Mary Shelley.

ADDRESS: To the Right Honble./ Lord Byron. ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 243–44. TEXT: From original letter.

### 157. *To Lord Byron\**

[Albaro] Saturday [? November 9, 1822]

Dear Lord Byron,

Hunt does not feel so lightly as your Lordship does as to what the *world will say*, and he has a deeper stake than you in it. I have read to him the principal part of your letter, and will write word for word his answer. I will add nothing—for really I have nothing to say—except that Murray is a troublesome fellow, and his first firebrand would have been more agreeable if, like the widow's, it had been hid under a bushel. Hunt says, "That he thinks something better might have been done, but that there are matters of taste, which it is not to be supposed that any body can alter at a moment's notice, even

<sup>3</sup> *The Deformed Transformed*.

if they ought. And that with regard to friendship, he feels that his friendship, in the sense in which you speak of it, is in the other world."

Certainly, if you did not feel any [friendship] for one of such transcendent merit, and whose merit you so freely acknowledged and praised, as Shelley, [Hunt] cannot complain.<sup>1</sup> For your pursuits and tastes were far more congenial—and then none of that *delicacy* you mention, which is the death of all sentiment, had existence between you. I do *not* think that his *poverty* in any degree enters into your consideration, unless to make you hold your hand—for I believe that talents and genius would at any time in your mind outweigh the [*illegible*] [*? disadvantage of poverty*]. He sees this somewhat differently, and talks about your being a *Lord*; he is quite in the wrong—it is *rimini-pimini*, and *follage*, and all that, which makes you dislike entering into the journal, although his talents of another kind have caused you to enter into it.

You cannot tell how I have been pained in entering into this subject [with] you. But I shall annoy you no more.

Ever yours obliged,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo, addressed. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 242. TEXT: From *ibid.*

## 158. To Edward John Trelawny

[Albaro] November 1822.

My dear Trelawny—

I called on you yesterday, but was too late for you. I was much pained to see you out of spirits the other night. I can in no way make you better, I fear, but I should be glad to see you. Will you dine with me Monday after your ride? If Hunt rides, as he threatens, with Lord Byron, he will also dine late and make one of our party. Remember, you will also do Hunt good by this, who pines in this solitude. You say that I know so little of the world that I am afraid I may be mistaken in imagining that you have a friendship for me, especially after what you said of Jane the other night; but besides the many other causes I have to esteem you, I can never remember without the liveliest gratitude all you said that night of agony when you returned to Lerici. Your praises of my lost Shelley were the only balm I could endure,<sup>2</sup> and he always joined with me in liking you from the first moment we saw you. Adieu.

Your attached friend,  
M. W. S.

[P.S.] Have you got my books on shore from the *Bolivar*? If you have,

<sup>1</sup> In his reply to Mary's letter (Letter 156), Byron had written: "As to friendship, it is a propensity in which my genius is very limited. I do not know the *male* human being, except Lord Clare, the friend of my infancy, for whom I feel anything that deserves the name. All my others are men-of-the-world friendships. I did not even feel it for Shelley, however much I admired and esteemed him."—Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 175.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 145, to Mrs. Gisborne.

pray let me have them, for many are odd volumes, and I wish to see if they are too much destroyed to rank with those I have.<sup>3</sup>

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Marshall, II, 47-48; *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 26n (from Marshall). TEXT: From Marshall.

### 159. *To Maria Gisborne*

Albaro near Genoa,  
Nov. 22nd 1822

My dear Friend

No one ever writes to me. Each day, one like the other, passes on and if I were where I would that I were methinks I could not be more forgotten. I cannot write myself, for I cannot fill the paper always with the self same complaints—or if I write them, why send them, to cast the shadow of my misery on others. What I have endured is not to be alleviated by time; for every new event & thought brings more clearly before me the fearful change. My ideas wanting their support, fall—wanting their mate, they pine—and nothing the earth contains can alleviate that. I see no one who did not know him & thus I try to patch up the links of a broken chain. I see consequently only the Hunts, Lord Byron & Trelawny. But although Hunt knew him, he did not know him lately, my freshest impressions are void for him, & he did not know Edward, who after My Lost One I loved best. Lord Byron reminds me most of Shelley in a certain way, for I always saw them together, & when L[ord] B[yron] speaks I wait for Shelley's voice in answer as the natural result—but this feeling must wear off—and there is so little resemblance in their minds, that L[ord] B[yron] seldom speaks to me of him without unwittingly wounding & torturing me.<sup>1</sup> With Trelawny I can talk & do talk for hours unweariedly of both, but he is about to leave us<sup>2</sup> & then I shall be thrown on my own mind to seek in its frightful depths for memories & eternal sorrow.

Pardon me, my dear Mrs. Gisborne, that I still write to you in this incoherent and unletterlike manner. But I strive in vain to do better. My last letter is a proof of how I succeed for when I curb myself to the relation of facts alone, or determine so to curb myself, I put off writing from day to day endeavouring to catch the moment when I shall feel less, but the pen in my hand the same spirit guides it, & one only thought swells the torrent of words that is poured out. Perhaps it would be better not to write at all; but the weakness of human nature is to seek for sympathy:—I think but of one thing—

<sup>3</sup> Evidently the books taken out of the *Don Juan*.

<sup>1</sup> In her journal Mary wrote on October 19, 1822: "I do not think that any person's voice has the same power of awakening melancholy in me as Albè's. I have been accustomed, when hearing it, to listen and to speak little; another voice, not mine, ever replied—a voice whose strings are broken. When Albè ceases to speak I expect to hear *that other* voice, and when I hear another instead, it jars strangely with every association. I have seen so little of Albè since our residence in Switzerland, and, having seen him there every day, his voice—a peculiar one—is engraved on my memory with other sounds and objects from which it can never disunite itself."—Marshall, II, 43.

<sup>2</sup> He left Genoa shortly after December 20, on which date he was "on the eve of his departure for Leghorn" (Letter 162). From Leghorn he went, later, to Rome.

my past life—while living (do I live now?) I loved to imagine futurity, & now I strive to [do] the same—but I have nothing desirable to imagine, save death; & my fancy flags or sleeps or wanders when it endeavours to pursue other thoughts.—I imagine my child dead & what I should do then—never does the idea of peaceful futurity intrude itself— I feel that my whole life is one misery—it will be so—mark me— I shall never know peace:—my only safeguard is in not seeking it, for so surely as I do shall I be cast wounded, helpless & lacerated on the barren rocks of my most cheerless life

Again why do I write this. Let me say something else. The Hunts are getting on well— Marianne is not better but she is not worse— Hunt writes —& he turns over the pages of books & he makes puns—& save the same want of tact which he ever had, he is good & kind. We often see Trelawny of an evening— Hunt likes him very much, & for me I feel so deep a gratitude towards him that my heart is full but to name him. He supported us in our miseries, my poor Jane & I.—But for him menials would have performed the most sacred of offices—& when I shake his hand I feel to the depth of my soul that those hands collected those ashes— Yes—for I saw them burned & scorched from the office—no fatigue—no sun—or nervous horrors deterred him, as one or the other of these causes deterred all others—he stood on the burning sands for many hours beside the pyre—if he had been permitted by the soldiers he would have placed him there in his arms— I never—never can forget this— And now he talks of little else except my Shelley & Edward.—

I am very anxious to hear from Jane— It must be more than a month since I had a letter from her dated Paris. I wish to hear of her safe arrival at least— And next to that I wish for the papers Peacock is to send out to me. I wish *all* Mss. to be sent without any exception & that as soon as possible. I have heard from Miss Curran, she is in Paris & my Shelley's picture is at Rome—nothing can be done therefore with regard to that—so pray let me have the Mss. without any delay. If you s[houl]d receive a packet from Miss Kent directed to me pray send it with them. But let me entreat you, as you love me, to *wait* f[or] nothing—but the very *moment* the Mss. are obtained from [Peacock] to send them to me—sending me the bill of lading. This is of more consequence to me than you think.

I wish you would enter into an *unbreakable* engagement to me to write to me once a month. Your letter may be the work of several hours scattered over the month; but put a long letter into the post for me the first day of every month. I want some object, some motive, great or small— I should look forward to your letter as a certain thing, & it would be something to expect. Never mind what you write about—let it be about *his* friends—some facts—it would be a great solace to me indeed it would. If you see Jane, there will be plenty to say about her. . .

Well good night—for tonight I will write no more—as usual all are in bed except me—my restless thoughts, homeless in this world, if they do not

steal to the bed side of my sleeping babe, & then I tremble, wander to seek him who lives—& gives me strength to grieve eternally— Good night!—

Percy is quite well. After all there is something about him that seems of this world—I know not what. But I think the new soul tries to amalgamate itself with its stubborn shrine—& if it be too finely tempered it cannot succeed—if it does a certain something—earthly thought good, seems to announce the decision of nature.<sup>3</sup> So it is with Percy—the crisis was last summer—how I trembled for him then—& now it is not reason but habit that makes me shudder

I hear through Hunt's nephew that Peacock has given the "Essay on Poetry" to be published for the Liberal & Peacock added that he had other Mss. of Shelleys—which says Young Hunt— "We will procure"—now I am convinced there is nothing *perfect* and I wish ALL to be sent to me without delay, & nothing but this "Essay on poetry" to be given to the Liberal. Pray let all Mss. of whatever kind—letters &c be sent to me immediately.<sup>4</sup> A Miss [Elizabeth] Hitchener<sup>5</sup> has some Mss. of Shelley. She is dead, but they may be in the hands of her executor & you would afford me the greatest consolation I am capable of having & d[seal] of *real, real* friendship if you w[oul]d stir yourselves to get them. Hogg or Peacock w[oul]d tell you about her place of abode. Miss Westbrook, Harriets sister, now I see married to Mr. Beauchamp<sup>6</sup> has a quantity of Mss.—now I fear it would be utterly useless to endeavour to get them from her. But she being married—God knows—the thing might be tried, & the pleasure done to me immense.

Pray write soon. Post after post & I hear nothing from any body.

The quotation I sent from Shakespear for the velvet was wrong—the words are I believe— "There is nothing in us but must suffer a sea change"<sup>7</sup> — I have not a Shakespear to refer to—but will you look at the Tempest & if it be not too late get it written rightly. Adieu.

Affectionately yours

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] I hear that Jane is arrived through Miss Kent.—I am glad of that at least, for I began to be anxious.

Would you send a box of letters for Percy?

<sup>3</sup> This incoherent passage might possibly be mended to be slightly more intelligible: "if it does, a certain something (earthly though good) seems to announce the decision of nature."

<sup>4</sup> On April 15, 1823, Peacock wrote that a month ago he had sent a box to be shipped on the *Berbice*, Captain Wayth. "It contains the MSS. from Ollier, a number of letters, a packet from your Father, the six copies of 'Hellas,' 'Maid Marian,' a book and MS. [the *Poetical Epistle*] from the Gisbornes, and a MS. on the subject of diet. These, I believe, are all you wished to obtain, with the exception of the papers at Marlow [held by Mr. Madocks], which I cannot procure without a second visit for the purpose."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 932. Not all, if any, of the MSS held by Mr. Madocks were recovered. He still had some MSS in 1857, according to Charles S. Middleton, *Shelley and His Writings* (London, T. C. Newby, 1858), II, 98.

<sup>5</sup> Shelley's "Brown Demon," born about 1782, died shortly before March 8, 1822. For a sketch of her life, see Julian edition, VIII, xxv–xxix.

<sup>6</sup> Eliza Westbrook married Robert Farthing Beauchamp. On July 21, 1823, she and her father were appointed guardians of Ianthe Shelley (Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 512, 514–16). In her

ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne/ 33 King's Street West/ Bryanstone Square/ Inghilterra London. POSTMARKS: (1) GENOVA (2, English) FPO/ DE. 9/ 1822 (3) 12 o'Clock/ DE. 9/ 1822<sup>N<sup>a</sup></sup>. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, ff.531-32); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 215-17; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 900-903 (both quite incomplete); *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 94 (1937), 369-71. TEXT: From original letter.

## 160. To Lord Byron\*

Wednesday [November 27, 1822]  
Casa Negroto [Albaro].

My dear Lord Byron

I have received a letter this morning from my father.<sup>1</sup>—He says:—"I saw young Hanson today. His father has not yet seen Whitton. He is over head & ears in an unlucky business of his own respecting his daughter the Countess of Portsmouth."<sup>2</sup> This business is now almost every day before the L[ord] Chancellor. The young man however has promised me an interview with his father in a day or two. I told him I was writing this day to Italy. You shall hear from me the moment I know anything material on the subject."—I have plenty of patience in all this, and yet one way or another I shall be very glad when I come to a certainty on my affairs. However thanks to your Lordship's having prevented my journey to England, I *can* wait without any inconvenience for some time longer.

I have had also a letter from Jane. She is arrived, is in good health & is at present residing with her mother. She desires to be kindly remembered to you.

This is all my news. Except that both my father & Jane say that Peacock does not appear lukewarm but assiduous in my affairs. This is indeed of much consequence as he is on the spot. Besides that it is always a pleasant thing to receive kindnesses; and I need not say how truly I thank you for those that you have shewn me. I am quite of the *old school* with regard to gratitude & I feel it very deeply whenever my friends are good enough to shew affection for me and I am not afraid of being misinterpreted when I express it—

Truly yours

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 271-72. TEXT: From original letter.

letter of March 17, 1823, Mrs. Gisborne wrote: "I have consulted Hogg about the probability of obtaining writings, whether letters or poetry, from Harriet's sister: he is of opinion that any application would be utterly useless, but if you wish to try a remote chance of success, then the only person who could come forward in such a case with propriety is your father."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 925.

<sup>1</sup> Mary was wrong again. See Letter 150, note 4.

<sup>2</sup> Dated November 15; printed in *Shelley and Mary*, III, 904 A-C. Marshall prints the letter (II, 50-52), but omits the passage quoted here.

<sup>3</sup> Mary Anne Hanson, eldest daughter of John Hanson, married Lord Portsmouth on March 7, 1814, Byron being present. In 1822, Lord Portsmouth's nephew, H. W. Fellowes, petitioned the Court of Chancery to declare his uncle insane. The case opened on November 7, and a verdict declaring Lord Portsmouth had been mad since 1809 was returned by the jury in February, 1823. (See Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, II, 393-94; VI, 170, 176-77.)



## 161. To Jane Williams

[Albaro, ? December, 1822]

... L[ord] B[yron] is to me as kind as ever; I hardly see him, *maneo male*; but he is all professions and politeness and in the only instance that I called on him for action<sup>1</sup> he complied with my request in the kindest and fullest manner. I do not suppose any miracle worked in my favour, or that his defect would not touch me if I touched it, but his purse strings are yet undrawn by me and will remain so, and that you know is the tender point. . . . He has done himself with T[relaw]ny and over-done himself with Roberts, on account of some *old clothes*,<sup>2</sup> quite in the *auctioneering* taste and this defect of his grows and grows until his whole character is overshadowed by its virtue-killing shade.

ORIGINAL: Lord Abinger. PRINTED: Grylls, *Mary Shelley*, 178 (quot., 11 lines).  
TEXT: Extract from Grylls, *Mary Shelley*.

## 162. To Claire Clairmont

[Albaro] December 20, 1822

My dear Clare—

I have delayed writing to you so long for two reasons. First, I have every day expected to hear from you; and secondly, I wished to hear something decisive from England to communicate to you. But I have waited in vain for both these things. You do not write, and I begin to despair of ever hearing from you again. A few words will tell you all that has been done in England. When I wrote to you last, I think that I told you that Lord Byron had written to Hanson, bidding him call upon Whitton. Hanson wrote to Whitton desiring an interview, which Whitton declined, requesting Hanson to make his application by letter, which Hanson has done, and I know no more. This does not look like an absolute refusal, but Sir Timothy is so capricious that we cannot trust to appearances.

And now the chapter about myself is finished, for what can I say of my present life? The weather is bitterly cold with a sharp wind, very unlike dear, *carissima* Pisa; but soft airs and balmy gales are not the attributes of Genoa, which place I daily and duly join Marianne in detesting. There is but one fire-place in the house, and although people have been for a month putting up a stove in my room, it smokes too much to permit of its being lighted. So I am obliged to pass the greater part of my time in Hunt's sitting-room, which is, as you may guess, the annihilation of study, and even of pleasure to a great degree. For, after all, Hunt does not like me:<sup>3</sup> it is both our faults, and I do

<sup>1</sup> This evidently refers to Byron's letter of October 23, 1822, to his solicitor John Hanson, requesting him to confer with Whitton on Mary's behalf (see Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 127-28).

<sup>2</sup> The quarrel with Captain Roberts about "old clothes" is the subject of Byron's letters of November 21 and 29 to Trelawny, and of November 29 to Roberts (Byron's *Works*, Letters and Journals, VI, 142, 144-46).

<sup>3</sup> After Shelley's death, Hunt treated Mary coldly for many months, because, he said, Mary

not blame him, but so it is. I rise at 9, breakfast, work, read, and if I can at all endure the cold, copy my Shelley's MSS. in my own room, and if possible walk before dinner. After that I work, read Greek, etc., till 10, when Hunt and Marianne go to bed. Then I am alone. Then the stream of thought, which has struggled against its *argine* all through the busy day, makes a *piena*, and sorrow and memory and imagination, despair, and hope in despair, are the winds and currents that impel it. I am alone, and myself; and then I begin to say, as I ever feel, "How I hate life! What a mockery it is to rise, to walk, to feed, and then go to rest, and in all this a statue might do my part. One thing alone may or can awake me, and that is study; the rest is all nothing." And so it is! I am silent and serious. Absorbed in my own thoughts, what am I then in this world if my spirit live not to learn and become better? That

had given Shelley much unhappiness. He and Mary were not fully reconciled until shortly before Mary left Italy in July, 1823. (See Letter 183.) The following partially unpublished letter from Jane Williams to Hunt tells much of importance about Mary's and Hunt's estrangement. The original letter (A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to; British Museum, Add. MSS 38, 523, ff.85-86) reads:

28 April [1824]

I write to you my dear friend without waiting the arrival of your long promised letter: the truth is your message [*sic*] through Miss Kent has perplexed so much that I feel it necessary to discuss the subject with you, in the hope that I shall convince you I am not so culpable as you imagine on one point, tho' I cannot entirely acquiesce in your opinions on another— In the first place you say "The truth is she perplexed me very much in my intercourse with Mrs. S. by giving me accounts which exceedingly embittered it and made me cold and almost inhospitable, and yet at the same time never hinting a word on the subject to Mrs. S. unless indeed she did say something in her letters now & then which I suspected from the effect which her correspondence used occasionally to have"— The inference to be drawn from the above paragraph is this— That my representation of Mary's conduct was the cause of your coldness to her. Now pardon me if I say this is somewhat unjust. If I recollect rightly our discussion concerning Mary arose from her conduct on a certain occasion (which I need not mention) to which you were a witness as well as myself: and if that sad circumstance had not called it forth, I imagine the discussion would never have been entered into, at all events I did not conceive I was speaking to a stranger who would receive an evil impression from what I said: on the contrary I had always heard you spoken of by Mary as her most intimate friend; as one who had known her long, and had lived for some time under her roof— Now it is utterly impossible to do this, and not know whether a persons temper be bad or good: you I imagined as well as myself had seen that the intercourse between Shelley & Mary was not as happy as it should have been; and I remember your telling me that our Shelley mentioned several circumstances on that subject that distressed you during the short week you were together and that you witnessed the pain he suffered on receiving a letter from Mary at that period. Now had you been an entire stranger to Mary I should have been inexcusable in having entered into any conversation that would tend to give you an unfavorable impression of her; and you would have been equally so, in having *acted* towards her upon such an impression, so that I must still hope & believe your own observation *alone* guided you in your conduct to her and not anything I might have said to you in the discussion to which I allude— With regard to the effect my correspondence produced on Mary sometimes, I am unable to give any explanation; it must have proceeded from subjects entirely different to the one in question, which has never occupied either my thoughts or my pen since that time. I do not recollect having named you in my letters otherwise than in the way of remembrance and I naturally concluded you would see them. You then say "What was my awkward situation when I discovered that Mary was bitterly repenting of the trouble she had occasioned Shelley. I felt as if I could not sufficiently make her amends for my former treatment" &c Now I do not see why Mary's repentance should cause you to feel remorse. You acted coldly because you thought her conduct merited that coldness; [or?] you I am sure are incapable of shewing it. Mary repents: there is then no reason for coldness and with her returning good feelings your kindness to her returns. This is as it should be: but I think you tax yourself with injustice to her improperly when you talk of feeling remorse; and I think you will agree with me when you have reconsidered the subject. You say "Tell Jane if I suspect her of a fault it is of allowing herself to say too much (not untruly God knows) about a person to others while she says *nothing* of the matter to the person herself." I differ from you *entirely*, as to the necessity of my telling Mary her faults; for I feel convinced

is the whole of my destiny; I look to nothing else. For I dare not look to my little darling other than as—not a sword of Damocles, that is a wrong simile, or to a wrecked seaman's plank—true, he stands, and only he, between me and the sea of eternity; but I long for that plunge! No, I fear for him pain, disappointment,—all, all fear.

You see how it is, it is near 11, and my good friends repose. This is the hour when I can think, unobtruded upon, and these thoughts, *malgré moi*, will stain this paper. But then, my dear Clare, I have nothing else except my nothingless self to talk about. You have doubtless heard from Jane, and I have heard from no one else. I see no one. The Guiccioli and Lord Byron once a month. Trelawny seldom, and he is on the eve of his departure for Leghorn. All as yet wears a tranquil appearance with regard to Gabrielle. W. is still here, & they go out nowhere. This is the list of my outdoor acquaintances; I see no other human face.

Marianne suffers during this dreadfully cold weather, but less than I should have supposed. The children are all well. So also is my Percy, poor little darling: they all scold him because he speaks loud *a l'Italian*. People love to, nay, they seem to exist on, finding fault with others, but I have no right to complain, and this unlucky stove is the sole source of all my *dispiacere*; if I had that, I should not tease any one, or any one me, or my only one; but after all, these are trifles. I have sent for another *ingeniere*, and I hope, before many days are elapsed, to retire as before to my hole.

I have again delayed finishing this letter, waiting for letters from England, that I might not send you one so barren of all intelligence. But I have had none. And nothing new has happened except Trelawny's departure for Leghorn, so that our days are more monotonous than ever. The weather is drearily cold, and an eternal north-east whistles through every crevice. Percy, however, is far better in this cold than in summer; he is warmly clothed, and gets on.

---

I shd. only make her unhappy while I should fail in producing the desired effect. That task I leave to you my dear friend who are so well able to correct human follies and to drop a tear of pity on human weakness—in me it wd. be annoyance and presumption. Nobody can better appreciate Mary's many noble qualities than myself. The feeling of repentance shews a kindly disposed heart and the avowal of it a God-like mind. The tear drop of repentance was the gift that gained a paradise for the Peni: let us hope that the one shed by our Peni will gain for her that Paradise she has so well earned, the love of her friends—

I passed the other day with the Novello's they are dear true hearted people and among the best specimens I know of human nature. I regret that I see so little of Miss Kent in consequence of the distance that separates us; and my health is so weak I am incapable of much exertion. I am yet undecided as to when I shall visit the South but think it will be in the Autumn. I am sorry to hear so sad an account of Mrs. Hunt's health I had hoped Italy would have done more for her; pray remember me kindly to her and accept my dear the best wishes of

Yours most sincerely

J. Williams

[P.S.] I must beg you not to name these things to Mary as it would create a most unpleasant discussion, and do no good.

ADDRESSED: Leigh Hunt Esq/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Italic. POSTMARK:  
F 24.  
23

Adieu. Pray write. My love to Charles; I am ashamed that I do not write to him, but I have only an old story to repeat, and this letter tells that.

Affectionately yours,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Sold at Sotheby's on March 15, 1922, to Pforzheimer (possibly Carl H. Pforzheimer, New York). PRINTED: By H. B. Forman in *Macmillan's Magazine* (May, 1880), 55-56; *Shelley and Mary*, III, 905-907; Marshall, II, 54-57. TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 163. To Edward John Trelawny\*

Albaro,  
Jan. 7th [1823].

A letter, my dear Trelawny, from this solitary and wind stricken hill of Albaro—may well appear to you a letter from the dead to the living. And shut out as I am from all communication with life I feel as if a letter from you would be to me a token sent from a world of flesh and blood to one of shadow. Here I am just as you left me—the wind whistling, and myself as comfortless as then. Forgotten by every body I cannot forget them and much less you—since the scenes that are ever present to my memory are those in which you bore a principal part, and *cold* as my heart is it warms then with gratitude—What should we, poor Jane and I, wild and desolate as we were, have done without you. We saw sorrow in other faces but we found help only from you.

I would not make you sorrowful by recalling those heavy hours but I have nothing so near my heart—and when I write that subject seems by right to tyrannize over my pen and to force me to write concerning it. I will conclude all allusion to it however by mentioning that soon after your departure Hunt had a letter from Mr. Brown<sup>1</sup> at Pisa telling him that he had received a letter from Mr. Severn (Keats' friend) at Rome who said that he was about to fulfil the last scene of misery for me by—— by doing that which was to be done for me in that city<sup>2</sup>—You understand me—so all the difficulties seem to be surmounted though I anxiously wait for the letter which will *say* that all is done.

What are you doing? And does the wind blow as bleakly and is the weather as cruelly sharp with you as with us? I can go no where and have not been to Genoa once since you left us. The only thing that could take me there, would be my desire to call on Mrs. Thomas<sup>3</sup> to learn news of you (if she is more lucky than I in having heard from you) and of G.W.<sup>4</sup> and the first day that the sun shines I shall certainly go. I hate this place more than ever

<sup>1</sup> Charles Armitage Brown, the friend of Keats.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 146, note 1.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 166.

<sup>4</sup> Probably Gabrielle Wright. On February 8, 1823, Trelawny wrote to Claire: "I have not heard a word from or of G[abrielle] since leaving Genoa.—She is guarded so strictly."—*The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 40. On April 27, he wrote to Mary: "Gab[rielle] is writing the most distracted letters. Mrs. Thomas says she has so persecuted her that she will not have anything to do with her. Poor girl! I will see her at Genoa when W. starts."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 936. See Letter 224, note 3.

and shall be delighted to get away—for indeed I shall be wretched until then but I must stay with Marianne for some months, and besides Sir. T. Shelley has declined giving any answer to the application made to him for an allowance for me. L[ord] B[yron] is now writing to him directly for a decisive answer—until that is decided I must be very economical, although as yet my money is far from being expended and I expect to receive some also<sup>5</sup> from the Liberal.

I do not mention any thing of Claire's affairs since she says in a letter I received from her yesterday that she has written to you directed to the Post Office of Leghorn. I have not heard from Jane. And the only news I have is that the 2nd number of the Liberal was published the 1st of this month and promises to be a good number. There is in it the "Heaven and Earth" of L. B. Shelley's Defence of Poetry—2 articles by Hazlitt, 1 by Hogg—1 of mine,<sup>5</sup> &c.—Will you have the kindness to lend your copy of the 1st number to Mrs. Mason—if you direct it to her, Casa Silva, Pisa, Dunn can send it—and I promise you that it will be speedily and safely returned.

Just this time last year, my dear Friend, you left Genoa to find us happy and enjoying all the goods of life at Pisa. You found two who have now deserted us—you found me, so full of spirits and life that methinks when you first saw me you must have thought me even a little wild—now all is changed and surely he who is now beside my beloved boy at Rome is not more altered than I. I find only solitude—I live only [ ] sorrow and my imagination then so fond of sharing with [ ] the shores of the sweet waters of life now only swells under funereal shades—unless it peep beyond them to something that will be when I am not here. But may you long enjoy that delight which the stirring of one's warm blood—and the sense of life and the emotions of love may and do bestow.—You deserve every happiness and I trust that [you] do enjoy a part at least.

Adieu—trust to the feelings of gratitude and affection with which I am yours and when you are too melancholy to do any thing else write to

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] I have received a letter from Jane—she is well and enquires kindly after you.—She is in low spirits and longs for Italy.

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny Esq./ Presso al Signor Dunn/ Via Grande/ Livorno. POSTMARKS: (1) GENOVA (2) 10 GENNAIO. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

<sup>5</sup> The first number of *The Liberal* was published on October 15, 1822 (advertized in the *Examiner*, October 6); the second, on January 1, 1823 (advertized, *Examiner*, December 27, 1822); the third, on April 26; the fourth, on July 30. Shelley's "Defence of Poetry" did not appear in any number. Hazlitt's articles in No. 2 were "On the Spirit of Monarchy" and "On the Scotch Character"; Hogg's was on "Longus"; and Mary's was "A Tale of the Passions." Shelley's "Song, written for an Indian Air" was also included. As compensation for Shelley's and her own contributions to the first two numbers, Mary received £36. By February 25, the first number had netted a profit of £377; the second had lost £41. (Blunden, *Leigh Hunt*, 182.)

164. *To Lord Byron*\*

[Albaro] Tuesday [January 7, 1823]

My dear Lord Byron,

Your letter is very good,<sup>1</sup> and I cannot express to you how obliged I am by your kindness. You have been, and are, very kind to me now that I have so few friends, that I feel it and want it most.

You have not mentioned in your letter that you enclose by my desire the certificates my father mentioned; but as those must be got in England, I think it is best as it is.

When you send to the post, will you have the kindness to send Lega to me for letters?

Most truly yours obliged,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 269. TEXT: From *ibid*.

165. *To Lord Byron*

[Albaro] Sunday [January, 1823]

Dear Lord Byron,

The more I read this Poem that I send, the more I admire it. I pray that your Lordship will finish it. It must be your own inclination that will govern you in that; but from what you have said, I have some hopes that you will. You never wrote anything more beautiful than one lyric<sup>2</sup> in it, and the whole, I am tempted to say, surpasses "your former glorious style"—at least it fully equals the very best parts of your best productions.

Truly yours,  
M W S.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 1 p. (4¼ x 5½ inches). PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 266. TEXT: From *ibid*.

166. *To Mrs. Thomas*<sup>3</sup>

Albaro, Wednesday [January, 1823]

Will you take pity on me & send me a book to amuse me: . . . Miss Burney,

<sup>1</sup> Byron's letter of January 7, 1823, to Sir Timothy Shelley, requesting him to arrange for the maintenance of Mary and her son. The certificates were of Shelley and Mary's marriage and the baptism of Percy Florence. Byron's letter is printed in Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 563-65. According to Whitton's diary for January 29, 1823, Sir Timothy intimated "that he thought of allowing Mary a sum of £160 a year."—*Ibid*. Sir Timothy's reply is dated February 6.

<sup>2</sup> *The Deformed Transformed*? It never was completed. On January 25, 1823, Byron wrote to Hunt: ". . . in the meantime, I send to Mrs. S. a few scenes more of the drama before begun, for her transcriptive leisure."

<sup>3</sup> The Pierpont Morgan Library (W25A) has a copy of *Frankenstein*, 1818, presented by Mary to Mrs. Thomas ("Mrs. Thomas from her friend—the Author Mary Shelley," in Mary's hand). The volumes have Mary's corrections and additions for a second edition; but these changes did not appear in the second edition, 1823.

On the half-title, Mrs. Thomas wrote: "My acquaintance with this very interesting person—arose from her being introduced to me under circumstances of so melancholy a nature (which at-

Mrs. Ratcliffe, or the last of Scott . . . I send the second no. of the *Liberal*, you know my crime therein.

ORIGINAL: Owned by Walter T. Spencer, London, in 1937; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo.  
UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Quotation sent me by Spencer, who would not permit me to copy the letter.

167. *To Edward John Trelawny\**

Albaro,

Janry. 31st [1823]

When you get this letter, my dear Trelawny, your voyage will be at an end. I am however anxious to hear of its conclusion. We have had and continue to have frightful weather, and if it be not better with you your arrival at Rome will be much retarded. I write with the suspicion that you will not receive my letter— So I shall be shorter than would otherwise be the case.

You will hear at Rome that it is all compleated and how it has been done.<sup>1</sup> You will see Mr. Freeborn (whom pray thank in my name) and Hunt in a letter he writes to Mr. Severn will mention your arrival and that you will probably have the goodness to call upon him. Mr. Severn was the friend of Keats; he seems to have been mainly instrumental in bringing the present ceremony to a termination— Pray call on him—and tell me also if Sir Charles Sykes was not one of the persons who made one at the funeral. Mr. Severn has written Hunt an account of it—and that dreary night of doubt is now off my mind.

Indeed I do believe, my dear Trelawny, that you are the best friend I have<sup>2</sup>—and most truly would I rather apply to you in any difficulty than to any one else—for I know your heart, and rely on it. At present I am very well off, having still a considerable residue of the money I brought with me from Pisa and besides I have received £33 from the *Liberal*.<sup>3</sup> Part of this I have been obliged to send to Claire. You will be sorry to hear that the last account she has sent of herself is that she is seriously ill. The cold of Vienna has doubtless contributed this—as it is even a dangerous aggravation of her old complaint. I wait anxiously to hear from her. She is still at Madme. Henneickstein's. I sent her 15 Napoleons—and shall send more if necessary and if I can. L[ord]

tended her widowhood)—that it was impossible to refuse the aid asked of me— I gave her all I could and passed many delightful hours with her at Albaro— She left Genoa in a few months for England. I called on her in London in 1824 but as my friends disliked her Circle of Friends—and Mrs. Shelley was then no longer in a Foreign Country helpless, pennylesse, and broken hearted—I never returned again to her, but I preserve this Booke and her Autograph Notes to me—as at some future day they will be Literary Curiosities—”

In an unpublished letter dated October 4, 1823, to Mary Shelley, Mrs. Leigh Hunt wrote (Bodleian, MS Shelley Adds. d.5, ff.42–43): “Mrs. Thomas has sent for your direction I paid her as you desired or at least she paid herself for she stopt 6 or 7 crowns for freight of boxes &c out of what Mr. Saunders was to send us. I mention it that you may know how to deal with such a lady and if it may please you to unite voices. She has done for herself in Mr. Hunt's good graces; I don't know if that was the cause or no.” (See Letter 214.)

<sup>1</sup> The burial of Shelley's ashes. See Letter 146, note 1.

<sup>2</sup> Mary's letter is an answer to Trelawny's letter of January 7 and 11 from Piombino, incompletely printed in Marshall (II, 63–64) and *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, but completely in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 909–11.

<sup>3</sup> John Hunt's account states the sum as £36. (Blunden, *Leigh Hunt*, 182).

B[yron] continues kind—he has made frequent offers of money—I do not want it—as you see.

I wrote to you addressed to Dunn at Leghorn—if he forwards that letter to you at Rome you will see from it that Sir T. Shelley refused to give any answer to Hanson's application— Lord Byron has written to Sir T. S[helley] himself and the answer *can* arrive in about 10 days.<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps when you are at Rome you will not dislike calling on a Mr. Brunelli who was at one time the English Vice Consul there. Miss Curran left 2 pictures of me and of Claire in his possession to give to us if we wished<sup>5</sup>— He has not that of Shelley I fear, but you might enquire about it.

I still turn towards Florence away from this hateful place. Marianne's situation will probably keep us here until June. At any rate I rely on seeing you again next summer— You will not stay more than a month or two at Rome—and Roberts will not venture to Naples in the heat I am sure.

Adieu. As soon as I hear from you I will write again; but as I said, I suspect this letter may never reach you— As usual with us the wind howls and the rain descends and as usual with me—I am as melancholy as the dreary night itself— All is over for me—I endeavour to be resigned; but I cannot but repine when I think of last winter—then I had no thing to desire—now I have nothing to fear—and in a short-short time I trust I may repose in that divine City beside my set Sun.

Affectionately Yours,  
Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Severn's Address—

No. 10 Via di San Indoro

Secondo Piano.

Claire wrote to you directed to Leghorn.

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Roma. POSTMARK: GENOVA. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: (Mostly unpublished) Marshall, II, 64 (quot., 13 lines); *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 34n (quot. from Marshall). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 168. To Lord Byron\*

[Albaro] Tuesday [February 25, 1823]  
½ past 2 P.M.

My dear Lord Byron,

I cannot call on the C[ountess] G[uiccioli] today or I should be glad to

<sup>4</sup> Byron wrote on January 7. In calculating, Mary allowed the usual average time of two weeks for Byron's letter to reach England and a similar period for Sir Timothy's letter to reach Italy, leaving Sir Timothy about three days to cogitate before replying.

<sup>5</sup> Trelawny got the portraits. On April 11 he wrote to Claire: "I have got possession of a portrait of you—by Miss Curran—it is an excellent likeness—"—*The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 46–47. Trelawny kept these portraits for many years. In 1850 Mary, wishing to give hers to Lady Jane Shelley, tried to persuade Trelawny to return it, but he ignored the request. Claire's portrait is reproduced by Forman in his edition of *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, opposite page 46.



do so, that I might have an opportunity to converse with your Lordship. It appears to me that the mode in which Sir T[imothy] S[helley] expresses himself about my child plainly shew[s] by what mean principles he would be actuated—he does not offer him an asylum in his own house, but a beggarly provision under the care of a stranger.<sup>1</sup>

Setting aside that I would not part with him. Something is due to me— I should not live ten days separated from him. If it were necessary for me to die for his benefit the sacrifice would be easy—but his delicate frame requires all a mother's solicitude—nor shall he be deprived of my anxious love & assiduous attention to his happiness while I have it in my power to bestow it on him. Not to mention that his future respect for his excellent father & his moral wellbeing greatly depend upon his being away from the immediate influence of his relations—

This perhaps you will think nonsense, & it is inconceivably painful to me to discuss a point which appears to me as clear as noonday—besides I loose all—all honourable station & name when I admit that I am not a fitting person to take care of my infant—The insult is keen—the pretence for heaping it upon me too gross—the advantage to them if the will came to be contested would be too immense—

As a matter of feeling I would never consent to it— I am said to have a cold heart<sup>2</sup>—there are feelings however so strongly implanted in my nature that to root them out life will go with it.

I am delighted to hear you are well— Don Juan will not annoy me— I am obliged to occupy myself closely to curb in some degree the agitation that in spite of all my efforts possesses me

Most truly yours  
Mary Shelley

[P.S.] I will come down to Casa Saluzzi tomorrow.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 913-14; Marshall, II, 67. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> Sir Timothy Shelley's reply to Byron, dated February 6, was received on February 24, on which day Mary wrote in her journal: "Today, melancholy would invade me, and I thought the peace I enjoyed was transient. Then that letter came to place its seal on my prognostications. Yet it was not the refusal, or the insult heaped upon me, that stung me to tears. It was their bitter words about our Boy. Why, I live only to keep him from their hands. How dared they dream that I held him not far more precious than all, save the hope of again seeing you, my lost one."—Marshall, II, 70.

Sir Timothy had written: "I cannot agree with your Lordship that . . . Mrs. Shelley is innocent; on the contrary, I think that her conduct was the very reverse of what it ought to have been, and I must, therefore, decline all interference in matters in which Mrs. Shelley is interested. As to the child, I am inclined to afford the means of a suitable protection and care of him in this country, if he shall be placed with a person I shall approve."—Marshall, II, 66.

<sup>2</sup> This is a charge which evidently was made many times and which haunted Mary throughout life. It comes up not infrequently in her journals and letters, always with a touch of bitterness. The charge was made by Shelley in several of his poems and letters after the stay at Este. Hunt, Jane Williams, Claire, and Trelawny repeated it. That Mary was not in reality cold-hearted, there is abundant proof. For a fuller analysis of Mary's character, see Appendix II.

169. *To Thomas Jefferson Hogg*

Albaro, Near Genoa. Feb. 28 [1823]

[Original letter owned by Captain R.J.J. Hogg. See Letters 6-16.]

170. *To Mrs. Saunders\**

Albaro

Friday [? February-March, 1823]

My dear Madam

I return the Examiner and should be much pleased to have another, which I will send back sooner than I have done this, but you said that you were in no hurry for it. Lord Byron says that he returned the last one that he had to Dr. Alexander.<sup>1</sup> You mentioned that you could lend me the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews, Mr. Hunt would be very glad to see them.

This weather confines us in our windy and solitary prison;—I cannot ask you to come, but if you receive any news concerning Trelawny will you let me know where he is & what he is doing. My Compliments to Mr. Saunders.<sup>2</sup>

Sincerely yours—

Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Pierpont Morgan Library; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

171. *To Lord Byron\**

Albaro

Teusday [March 4, 1823]

My dear Lord Byron

I am indeed at a loss to conceive of what is at present to be done; there is no law to help me, & certainly no feeling that can be of service to me with a man who could make that insolent & hardhearted proposition about my poor boy.—*That* did a little overcome my philosophy. If the persecuted Liberal still continues that may in some degree prevent my burthening any one in my present evil fortune—if not some other means may be thought of. Perhaps if I were in England he might be shamed into doing something, but the difficulty of getting there, & the dearness of living when arrived, would I think destroy all good that could accrue from such a journey; though doubtless my being in Italy does my cause no good.

I sent a copy of the letter<sup>3</sup> last night to my father that I might as soon as possible have his opinion & advice upon it. Your Lordship's also would of course be gratifying to me—but I fancy that you feel as I do, that the affair is hopeless.

<sup>1</sup> Byron's English physician at Genoa; he recommended the doctor who accompanied Byron to Greece.

<sup>2</sup> I cannot identify Mr. and Mrs. Saunders further.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Timothy's and Byron's letters are referred to here.

I have been expecting Don Juan but I fear your Lordship's illness<sup>4</sup> has been the cause of its delay—perhaps this fine weather will cure you—

Very truly yours

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: To the Rt. Honble/ Lord Byron. ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 267. TEXT: From original letter.

### 172. *To Lord Byron\**

[Albaro] Wednesday [c. March 5, 1823]

My dear Lord Byron,

I could not well wait for you yesterday, but I do not intend to write to my father until next week. In the interval, perhaps, you can come up here; or if not, if you will let me know when I can conveniently see you, I will come down to Casa Saluzzi.

I am very grateful to you for your kind offers yesterday. In part I must avail myself of them to get to England; but I know too well how many claims you must have on you, and have been myself too long in a situation where more limited in our means, yet no one was satisfied with the little we did, not to have pity on the situation of one to whom all look up to as their prop; and be assured that I shall presume as little as possible on your kindness, and your demonstrations of good will will not cause me to tire those feelings, although I own that the expression of them is highly gratifying to me.

I hear that you have begun your 16th Canto [of *Don Juan*]. I trust that your Lordship will make use of me, in the only way I can be of service to you, as long as my residence near you gives you the opportunity.

Truly yours obliged,

Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 4¾ x 3½ inches). PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 266 (dated June). TEXT: From *ibid.*

### 173. *To Lord Byron\**

Albaro,

Sunday [c. March 9, 1823]

My dear Lord Byron,

The 15th Canto was so long coming, even after I had heard that it was finished, that I began to suspect that you thought that you were annoying me by sending me employment. Be assured, however, on the contrary, that besides the pleasure it gives me to be in the slightest manner useful to your Lordship, the task itself is a delightful one to me.

<sup>4</sup> On February 16 Byron wrote, "My 'chilblains' are, I assure you, no joke, and I can scarce move for them"; on February 27, "I am far from well."—Byron's *Works*, Journals and Letters, VI, 166–67, 169.

Is Aurora [i.e., Aurora Raby, *Don Juan*, Canto 15, stz. 43] a portrait? Poor Juan! I long to know how he gets out or rather into the net. Are the other Cantos to be published soon?

I have had no letters. I wait with no pleasant expectation for the result of my father's deliberations. It little matters which way he decides, for either to go or stay are equally disagreeable to me in the situation I now am. But the *present state* of things cannot and shall not last, though I see but dimly what is to come in lieu of it. I think it will be England after all—that will be best for my boy's health, and perhaps the least unexceptionable part for me to take.

I hope this fine weather has cured all your *incomodi*.

Truly yours obliged,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. 8 vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 267–68 (dated June). TEXT: From *ibid*.

174. *To Lord Byron\**

Casa Negroto [Albaro],  
Wednesday [c. March 12, 1823]

Dear Lord Byron,

I have received a letter from my father today, and should be glad to see your Lordship, if possible, before the post goes out to England. If it be not inconvenient to you, would you come up this evening at your usual hour? or will you mention a convenient time when I can see you at your own house?

Pardon this annoyance, your own kindness has caused it—and I hope that that kindness is sufficient to render you *not very* impatient under the trouble it has drawn on you.

Salute Madame Guiccioli for me.

Truly yours,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. (4 x 5 inches), addressed. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 265. TEXT: From *ibid*.

175. *To Edward John Trelawny*

[Albaro, April (c. 15), 1823]

I am most truly grateful to you, my dear Trelawny, for the additional benefit you have conferred upon me by placing the ashes of my Beloved Shelley apart from others.<sup>1</sup> But, my dear friend, you give too short an account of all this—you write to one whose heart and soul is in every letter penned on the subject, and there are several circumstances connected with what you have done, that appear obscure to me; I therefore write immediately that my letter may reach you before you quit Rome and I entreat you, by all your kindness towards me, to answer me immediately by return of post if you can.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is an answer to Trelawny's letter of April 2 (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 930–31). Trelawny replied on April 27 (Marshall, II, 72–75). See Letter 146, note 1.

Is the place you have selected for my Shelley within the Enclosure of the burying ground?

Where is this Burying Ground?—Is it not near the Tomb of Cestius on the further side from the Porta S. Paolo—near Monte Testaccio?

In enclosing a spot around the grave you have fulfilled my earnest wish—Will you tell me what the inscription on the tomb is—how are you planting it—have you placed a cypress—and how will you guard against violation of and provide for the care of what you have done. It occurred to me that for a moderate stipend the monks of a neighbouring convent would be good guardians since they would be permanent ones. We shall one day be both richer and my first hope is to place an enduring mark to denote where his spoils lie and to prove that no earthly creature ever had hearts and friends more entirely and truly devoted to him than my lost Shelley.<sup>2</sup>

My heart is beneath that weed grown wall. Would that I were really there! My first act of freedom will carry me there—but now I am a slave—who so great a one as a poor person—and I shall soon perform a far different and most hateful journey. I return to England. Sir T. S[helley] has refused to provide for me—yet in such a way as leaves a hope that he might be brought to another determination if I were not abroad,—for he acknowledges the rights of my boy—if he were in England— I go—with great regret—yet less than I once had—in poverty and dependance. Italy loses half its charm, if I live I shall return able to do all here that I desire— If not—still I shall return. I know that I shall suffer a great deal in England—and I own that there is not the prospect of a single feeling unembued with pain. But I submit. But for my boy I should soon be free from all these trammels and it is for his good that I devote myself.

I shall wait here until after Mrs. Hunt's con[finement] for I will not leave her until I see that dang[er is past (*MS torn, affecting several lines*)] detain me until June when you talk of retu[rning] ] trust that I shall see you before I go— [ ] A place of peril for you—the most ha[ ]—where you are never either well or hap[py] ] forgive myself if I were the means of draw[ ] meet in some other town on the road to [ ].

L. B. continues kind and attentive. [ ] for England.

I will write to you more at length at Flore[nce]. I only recur to the subject that has occasioned this [? request]. Do write to me before you quit Rome answering my questions which may appear trifling—but they are of the utmost importance to me—for as I said, my deepest, realest, and most eternal feelings—and my never resting thoughts are ever beside this Tomb.

Hunt desires to be remembered to you—and begs me to request you to

<sup>2</sup> Trelawny had written: "I am anxious to place some other memorial of my attachment—not of his worth—to mark the spot. . . . I have consulted artists here, but all the designs I have mentioned to them they cannot execute under from 200 l. to 500 l., and this is beyond me at present." —*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 931.

tell Mr. Severn that he writes to him tomorrow. I will write to Rose as you desire.<sup>8</sup> When do you think of going to Paris?

Happy Trelawny, you are at Rome— What a [*MS torn*] sound that name has ever been to me—how I [ ] loved that City— Now it contains my all.

Trust to the sincere Attachment of

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Roma. POSTMARKS: (1) GENOVA. (2) APRILLE. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

176. *To Lord Byron\**

Monday [ ? April, 1823 ]  
Albaro

My dear Lord Byron

I am afraid I annoy you very much by intruding myself and my affairs on you. I had hopes at one time not to have troubled any one; but fate is inimical to me.

I have received a letter from my father who thinks well of what I mentioned to your Lordship when I last saw you, rather more than a month ago, of a letter to Lord Holland. I cannot go to England until after Mrs. Hunt's confinement, & you seemed then to think that in the interim it might be well if my father saw Lord Holland, introduced by a letter from you. Do you still think so—and would you write?

I send you my father's letter that you may judge better. You will smile at the idea of Hunt's wishing to keep me. I am no such God-send to anyone—and he would find a better consoler—though I have entire hope that it will not be needed & all will go well.<sup>1</sup>

I am sufficiently out of spirits. The idea of maintaining myself in England I own frightens me. I—who nine days out of ten am too agitated & miserable to write at all.—However I hope my fortitude will re-awaken some of these days and in the meantime I have sufficient for the present. That is to say if the 3rd No. of the Liberal<sup>2</sup> comes out

Again I entreat your Lordship to excuse me— Your own kindness is indeed my only excuse—retract that, & I shall have none—and without one I will not sin.

Yours obliged  
Mary Shelley

<sup>8</sup> Trelawny had written: "I enclose you a letter . . . from my old friend Rose. Do favour me by replying in full to it in my name, and direct to her in Paris. Say everything; tell her . . . how anxious I have been to hear from her, how delighted with her constancy, . . . that I will take the first opportunity of coming to Paris to see her. Do, dear Mary, write her a long letter."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 931;<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was the mistaken opinion of the celebrated Vaccà that Mrs. Hunt would not survive her next confinement.

<sup>2</sup> The third number was published on April 26, 1823.

[P.S.] I would come down—but I have found that there is small chance of seeing you when I do—

ADDRESS: to the Rt. Honble/ Lord Byron. ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, edited by Murray, II, 268–69. TEXT: From original letter.

### 177. *To Maria Gisborne*

Albaro,  
May 2nd [1823]<sup>1</sup>

My dear Mrs. Gisborne,

Your letter<sup>2</sup> was very pleasing to me since it shewed me, that it was not want of affection that caused your silence: utter solitude is delightful to me, but in the midst of the waste, I am much comforted when I hear the quiet voice of friendship telling me that I am still loved by some one, and especially by those who knew my Shelley and have been his companions. You do well to say that it is an *almost* insurmountable difficulty in expressing your thoughts that causes you to be silent. For though occupation or indolence may often prevent your exerting yourself, yet when you do write, yours are the best letters I receive, especially as far as clearness and information goes.

I had a letter today from Trelawny at Rome concerning the disposition of the earthly dross of my lost one. He is in the Protestant burying ground at that place, which is beside, and not before, the tomb of Cestius. The old wall with an ancient tower bounds it on one side and beneath this tower, a weed grown and picturesque ruin, the excavation has been made. T[relawn]y has sent me a drawing of it—and he thus writes—“is placed apart, yet in the centre, and the most conspicuous spot in the burying ground. I have just planted six young cypresses and 4 laurels, in the front of the recess, which you see in the drawing, and which is caused by the projecting part of the old ruin. My own stone”—(T—y you know, one of the best and most generous of creatures, is eccentric in his way) “a plain slab, till I can decide upon some fitting inscription, is placed on the left hand—I have likewise dug my grave—so that when I die, there is only to lift up the coverlet, and roll me into it—you may lay on the other side, or I will share my narrow bed with you, if you like. It is a lovely spot. The only inscription on S[helley]’s stone, besides the *cor cordium* of Hunt, are three lines I have added, from Shakespeare

—“Nothing of him that doth fade  
but doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.”

“This quotation by its double meaning alludes both to the manner of his d[eat]h and his genius. And I think the element on which his soul took wing,

<sup>1</sup> Dated May 3 in all printed copies.

<sup>2</sup> Of March 17 (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 923–28).

and the subtle essence of his being mingled, may still retain him in some other shape. The water may keep the dead, as the earth may, and fire, and air. His passionate fondness might have arisen from some sweet sympathy in his nature; thence the fascination which so forcibly attracted him, without fear or caution to trust an element, which almost all others hold in superstitious dread, and venture as cautiously on as they would in a lair of lions."

This quotation is pleasing to me also, because a year ago, T—y came one afternoon in high spirits with news concerning the building of the boat—saying— Oh—we must all embark—all live aboard—"We will all suffer a sea-change," and dearest Shelley was delighted with the quotation—saying that he w[oul]d have it for the motto of his boat— Tr[elawn]y says in another part of his letter, "I have been digging and planting myself—there are 7 or 8 cypresses and as many laurels, about the tomb or rather I should say tombs, for I have completed one for myself and yesterday laid it down on the left of S. As they both stand on a very steep bank, I thought it necessary to put additional security to prevent their being moved, either by rain or otherwise—every thing is now most satisfactorily arranged."

Captain Roberts (Jane will tell you who he is) is just come from Rome. He confirms all that is said in this letter. Tell Jane I passed yesterday evening with him and talked a great deal of her and dearest Edward. I was pleased by the enthusiasm with which he spoke—he declared that he had never met a man to be compared [with] him—in Nobleness and amiability of Nature—together with a nameless charm that pervaded all his converse. Roberts had bought the hulk of that miserable boat—new rigged her—even with higher masts than before—he has sailed with her at the rate of 8 knots an hour, and on such occasions tried various experiments, hazardous ones, to discover how the catastrophe that closed the scene for us two poor creatures happened. It is plain to every eye. She was run down from behind. On bringing her up from 15 fathom all was in her—books, telescope, ballast, lying on each side of the boat without any appearance of shifting or confusion—the topsails furled—topmasts lowered—the false stern (Jane can explain) broken to pieces and a great hole knocked in the stern timbers. When she was brought to Leghorn, every one went to see her—and the same exclamation was uttered by all—She was run down by that wretched fishing boat which owned that it had seen them.<sup>3</sup>

I have written myself into a state of agitation—if I continued my letter it would only be to pour out the bitterness of my heart. Oh, this spring is so beautiful, the clear sky shines above the calm murderer—the trees are all in leaf and a soft air is among them— The stars tell of other spheres where I pray to be—for all this beauty while at times it elevates me—yet in stronger words tells me—that he, the best and most beautiful is gone.

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 144, note 6, Letter 150, note 8 and Letter 139, note 3.



Oh follow! follow!—

And on each herb, from which heavens dew had fallen

The like was stamped, as with a withering fire,

—And then

Low, sweet, faint sounds, like the farewell of ghosts

Were heard: oh, follow, follow, follow me.<sup>4</sup>

I will finish my letter Monday— God bless you: good night. I often see him—both he and dear Edward in dreams—perhaps I shall tonight—at least I shall not be in sleep as I am now—the clinging present is so odious—

(May 6th). I finish my letter. You will soon see me in England. It is not my own desire, or for my own advantage that I go—but for my boy's— So I am fixed—and enjoy these blue skies and the sight of vines and olive groves for the last time. I hope indeed to return—all my hopes are set upon that—but that is in case I get richer one day—if not I trust I return for [MS. *torn*] repose. I am sorry to hear the melancholy account you give of your situation—and am truly sorry that Henry does [not] gain the success that his talents deserve. I wait here to see Mrs. Hunt safe through her confinement— In her critical situation—among strangers and not speaking a word of Italian—without an English servant (the one she brought over has made a scapatura). Hunt speaking badly—and this vile Genoese destroying that little, my presence is necessary at least to keep up her spirits. That passed, the fear of the advancing season will make me begin my journey as quickly as possible. I should in any case have feared an Italian summer for my delicate child—the climate of England will agree with him. L. B. is very kind to me, and promises that I shall make my journey at my ease, which on Percy's account, I am glad of. He is much improved, poor boy—and cannot speak a word of English— Remember me to Mr. G. and Henry.

Did the end of Beatrice<sup>5</sup> surprise you. I am surprised that none of these Literary Gazettes are shocked— I feared that they would stumble over a part of what I read to you and still more over my Anathema. I wish much to see it—as my father has made some curtailments—but the vessel has not yet arrived. Is not the catastrophe strangely prophetic. But it seems to me that in what I have hitherto written I have done nothing but prophecy what has [? arrived] to. Matilda<sup>6</sup> foretells even many small circumstances most truly—and the whole of it is a monument of what now is.

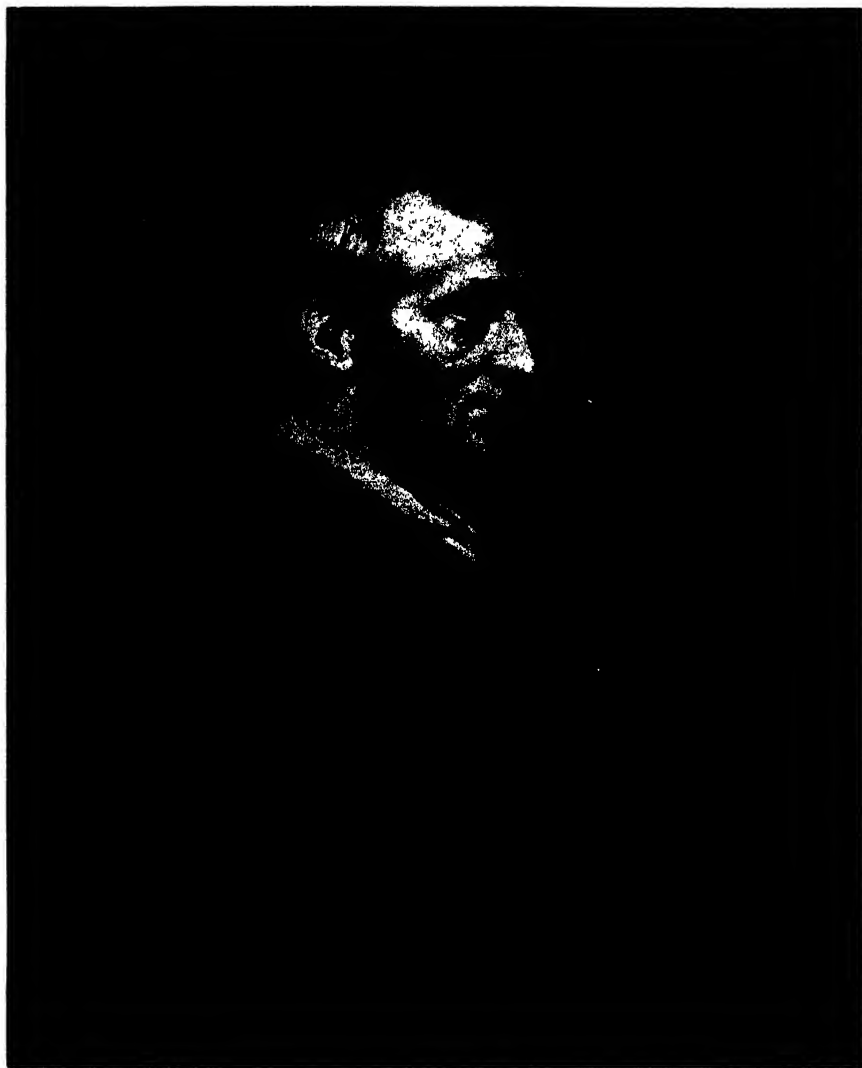
Adieu, my dear friend— Give my very tenderest love to Jane when you see her.

Affectionately Yours,  
Mary W. Shelley

<sup>4</sup> *Prometheus Unbound*, II., i, 153–55, 157–59.

<sup>5</sup> The first part of the paragraph refers to *Valperga*, published in February, 1823.

<sup>6</sup> See Letter 132, note 7.



WILLIAM GODWIN  
*from a painting by Northcote*

*Reproduced from C. Kegan Paul's  
William Godwin: His Friends and Contemporaries*



ADDRESS: Mrs. Gisborne, 33 Kings St. West,/ Bryanstone Square/ London.  
ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Shelley Memorials*, 218-21 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 936-40; Dowden, II, 535n (quot., 13 lines); Marshall, I, 326 (quot., 5 lines). (Dated May 3 in all printed texts. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

178. *To Captain Daniel Roberts\**

Albaro May 5th Monday [1823]

My dear Roberts

As I wish much to see the views of Rome of which you spoke, perhaps you would send them to Mrs. Thomas, where I would come to look them over.

I had a letter Friday from Trelawny, dated Rome April 27—he bids me tell you that he had received your 2 letters & had answered the first—asks if you join the Broughtons in Switzerland—talks of going thither himself, & requests that you would ask Reeze if he would go with him, & live on shore. But the idea of the Greek Expedition may alter all this & Lord Byron seems bent upon going. He says that he leaves Rome the following day after that on which he wrote—

This fine weather will assist you in your drawing. And may tempt you to come to Albaro— Adieu

Yours obliged

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Frank J. Hogan, Washington, D.C.; A.L.S., 1 p. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

179. *To Edward John Trelawny\*<sup>1</sup>*

Albaro,

May 10th [1823]

My dear Trelawny,

You appear to have fulfilled my entire wish in all you have done at Rome. Do you remember the day you made that quotation from Shakespear in our dining room at Pisa, mine own Shelley was delighted with it and thus it has for me a pleasing association. Sometime hence I may visit the spot which of all others I desire most to see. At present I visit it in imagination, and living as I almost entirely do in the exercise of that faculty, I can in this instance, aided by your sketch, almost believe myself to be under that divine sky, near that weed grown tower, looking on the pyramid of Cestius—knowing that the spoils of the most noble of earth's creatures is near me fondly trusting that his spirit is near too.

It is not on my own account, my excellent friend, that I go to England<sup>2</sup>—I believe that my child's interests will be best consulted by my return to that country— In every case I should have dreaded an Italian summer for him;

<sup>1</sup> In answer to Trelawny's letter of April 27 (partly in Marshall, II, 72-75).

<sup>2</sup> Trelawny wrote: "Do not go to England, to encounter poverty and bitter retrospections. Stay in Italy. I will most gladly share my income with you."

and when the time comes for asserting his rights, it would not be well to pounce down suddenly among them, unknown and unprotected. Desiring solitude and my books only, together with the consciousness that I have one or two friends who although absent, still think of me with affection—England of course holds out no inviting prospect to me. But I am sure to [be] rewarded in doing or suffering for my little darling, so I am resigned to this last act, which seems to snap the sole link which bound the present to the past, and to tear aside the veil which I have endeavoured to draw over the desolateness of my situation. Your kindness I shall treasure up to comfort me in future ill—I shall repeat to myself—I have such a friend; and endeavour to deserve it.

Do you go to Greece? Lord Byron continues in the same mind. The G[uiccioli] is an obstacle—and certainly her situation is rather a difficult one. But he does not seem disposed to make a mountain of her resistance; and he is far more able to take a decided than a petty step in contradiction to the wishes of those about him. If you do go it may hasten your return hither. I remain until Mrs. Hunts confinement is over. Had it not been for that, the fear of a hot journey would have caused me to go in this month—but my desire to be useful to her and my anxiety concerning the event of so momentous a crisis has induced me to stay. You may think with what awe and terror I look forward to the decisive moment—but I hope for the best.—She is as well, perhaps, better than we could in any way expect.

I had no opportunity to send you a 2nd No. of the *Liberal*—we only received it a short time ago—and then you were on the wing. The third number has come out, and we had a copy by post— It has little in it we expected but it is an amusing number and L. B. is better pleased with it than any other.

You do not mention your Eliza<sup>3</sup>—perhaps you have heard through the Lowes of her well being— But I trust that I shall see you soon and then I shall hear all your news.—I shall see you—but it will be for so short a time—I fear even that you will not go to Switzerland—but these are things I must not dwell upon—partings and separations—when there is no circumstance to lessen any pang—I must brace my mind—not enervate it—for I know that I shall have much to endure.

I asked Hunt's opinion about your epitaph for Keats<sup>4</sup>— He said that the line from *Adonais* though beautiful in itself—might be applied to any poet in whatever circumstances or whatever age that died—and that to be in accord with the two stringed lyre you ought to select one that alluded to his youth and immature genius. A line to this effect you might doubtless find in the *Adonais*.

Among the fragments of my lost Shelley I found the following poetical

<sup>3</sup> Trelawny's daughter, died in 1829. See *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 51, 59, 121, 130. Mary Low is described by Trelawny (page 40) as "my Pisa friend."

<sup>4</sup> "Here lies the spoils/ of a/ Young English Poet/ 'Whose master-hand is cold, whose silver lyre unstrung;'/ And by whose desire is inscribed,/ That his name was writ in water."—Marshall, II, 74.

commentary on the words of Keats—not that I recommend it for the epitaph—but it may please you to see it.

“Here lieth one, whose name was writ on water,  
But ere the breath that could erase it, blew,  
Death, in remorse for that fell slaughter,  
Death, the immortalizing writer, flew  
Athwart the stream, and time’s monthless torrent grew  
A scroll of Chrystal, emblazoning the name  
Of Adonais—”

I have not heard from Jane lately—she was well when she last wrote, but annoyed by various circumstances and impatient of her lengthened stay in England. How earnestly do I hope that Edward’s brother will soon arrive and shew himself worthy of his affinity to the noble and unequalled creature she has lost, by protecting one to whom protection is so necessary, and shielding her from some of the ills to which she is exposed.

Adieu, my dear Trelawny.—Continue to think kindly of me and trust in my unalterable friendship.

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze. POSTMARKS: (1) [GE]NOVA (2) 13 MAGGIO. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Marshall, II, 75–77; *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 55–57n (from Marshall). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

# 180. To Mrs. Thomas\*

Albaro—

Wednesday [May, 1823]

My dear Mrs. Thomas

I enclose the Bill of lading which I received today. I see it is dated the 30th April so god knows when my case will come. You were so kind as to say that Mr. Thomas would look to it when it entered Porto Franco, I send this bill to you.

Is there any hope of getting the books I mentioned from the Library. I should like to add—to that list Targioni Viaggij in Toscana in (I think) 12 volumes<sup>1</sup>—the miscellaneous works of Ariosto—consisting of nine—satyres & Comedies and the following works of Boccaccio: de montibus: silvis-fontibus—lacubus—de Casibus virorum & Foeminarum illustrium.

de Claris Mulieribus

All his letters Latin & Italian

Amorosa Visione — Ninfale Fiesolano

But I am most anxious about the books I mentioned first.

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Targioni—Tozzetti, *Relazioni d'alcuni viaggi fatte in diverse parti della Toscana, per osservare le produzioni naturali eglì antichi monumenti d'essa*, Edizione seconda, con copie giunte (Firenze, 1768–69, 12 tom.).

When you have done with the Liberal will you send it to Capn. Roberts—

What changeable weather! The invalids suffer by it— I am not among them—but I love cloudless skies too much to be at my ease in a sirrocco— I hope you are quite well—

By the bye do not fancy that Mrs. Hunt was not extremely happy that Thornton should visit your Richard— She expects the latter Saturday, and if you still continue so obliging as to wish it—Thornton will return his visit the Sunday after. The reason of his not seeing you last Sunday I will explain when I see you—

Compliments to Mr. Thomas

Very truly yours

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Will you give the piece of nankeen to the bearer

Has Mr. Saunders got Boswell's life of Johnson in his Library

Have the Indians (cioe the Indian leper) any scarfs or small shawls—of Chinese crape—worked or unworked—*black*—and would you tell me the price.

Do you know where Mrs. Hunt could get a shawl 7 palms square—of silk, blue, or purple—or almost any colour except red—& which ought not to cost more than 40 livres—I saw some 6½ square but that is too small—

I know you will pardon the impertinence of the commissions—but I can hardly pardon myself. If inconvenient to answer directly—keep the bearer quante vuole.

ORIGINAL: Pierpont Morgan Library;—A.L.S., 4 pp. (4½ x 5¼ inches).  
UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 181. *To Lord Byron*

Albaro,

Saturday [June 7, 1823]

[Summary] Mary has received a letter from Trelawny, who wants her to answer at once if Byron is going to Greece. Mary therefore is writing Byron to know if he is more certain than when she last saw him. Trelawny is willing to accompany Byron and to stake all on the Greek cause.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. (5½ x 5 inches). UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. SUMMARY: From the original letter.

## 182. *To Edward John Trelawny*

Albaro,

June 9, 1823.

Lord Byron says that, as he has not heard from Greece, his going there is uncertain; but if he does go, he is extremely desirous that you should join him, and if you will continue to let him know where you may be found, he will inform you as soon as he comes to any decision.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Trelawny's *Recollections*, 189 (quot., 5 lines).  
TEXT: From *ibid.*

183. *To Jane Williams*

Albaro, near Genoa July [1823]

I write to you in preference to my Father, because you, to a great degree, understand the person I have to deal with, and in communicating what I say concerning him, you can, *viva voce*, add such comments as will render my relation more intelligible.

The day after Marianne's confinement,<sup>1</sup> the 9th June, seeing all went on so prosperously, I told Lord Byron that I was ready to go, and he promised to provide means. When I talked of going post, it was because he said that I should go so, at the same time declaring that he would regulate all himself. I waited in vain for these arrangements. But, not to make a long story, since I hope soon to be able to relate the details—he chose to transact our negotiation through Hunt, and gave such an air of unwillingness and sense of the obligation he conferred, as at last provoked Hunt to say that there was no obligation, since he owed me £1000.<sup>2</sup>

Glad of a quarrel, straight I clap the door!<sup>3</sup>

Still keeping up an appearance of amity with Hunt, he has written notes and letters so full of contempt against me and my lost Shelley that I could stand it no longer, and have refused to receive his still proffered aid for my journey.<sup>4</sup> This, of course, delays me. I can muster about £30 of my own. I

<sup>1</sup> At the birth of Vincent.

<sup>2</sup> This passage (not, I believe, hitherto understood except by N. I. White) proves conclusively that the wager for £1000 made by Byron and Shelley late in 1821 and lost by Byron was regarded by Mary and Hunt, as well as by Medwin and Williams, as a bona fide wager which it was dishonorable of Byron not even to offer to pay. Medwin relates that before dinner at Byron's house, "as we were sitting in his studio, the conversation happening to turn on longevity, Byron offered Shelley a bet of £1000 on that of Lady Noel against Sir Timothy Shelley's, and which wager Shelley at once accepted. Not many weeks had elapsed when her ladyship died [on January 22, 1822], and we all thought that Byron would have paid the debt, or at least have offered to pay it—but he neither did one nor the other. . . . Williams . . . was highly indignant."—Thomas Medwin, *The Life of Shelley*, A New Edition (London, H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1913), 375.

<sup>3</sup> Pope, *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, line 67.

<sup>4</sup> An unpublished letter from Hunt to Byron, dated "Albaro, July [1823]," in the possession of Sir John Shelley-Rolls, throws more light on Byron's conduct. Hunt wrote: ". . . I confess it does astonish me, that . . . you could suffer yourself to speak in such a manner of Shelley and his connexions, especially after what you yourself have said of the supereminence of his nature and of the natures, origins and what not of the persons, whom you are now pleased to contrast with us all in a manner so new and admonitory. . . . there is one passage in your letter, which will, at all events, excuse me for saying, that should my friend after all his hard struggles in the cause of humanity, be destined to have a new and most unexpected hand, however formidable, laid upon his troubled head, the occasion will gift me with all the anger, and perhaps all the powers, necessary to make the blow repented,—and this, not as you seem to put it, because he was merely my friend, and therefore to be defended at all hazards, but because he was the friend of all the world, and died daily, inch by inch, in their cause. To anticipate, a second time a proper and honourable interpretation of this announcement in your Lordship's mind, wd., I trust, be paying an ill compliment to the actual feelings on both sides.

"Having now done what I thought my duty to my friend (for after the strange things you have said of her and hers, Mrs. Shelley finds it impossible to let me discuss that matter [of the £1000?] any further, and gives up all thoughts connected with it) I am obliged to trouble your Lordship, . . . with something relating to myself."



do not know whether this is barely sufficient, but as the delicate constitution of my child may oblige me to rest several times on the journey, I cannot persuade myself to commence my journey with what is barely necessary. I have written, therefore, to Trelawny for the sum requisite, and must wait till I hear from him.<sup>5</sup> I see you, my poor girl, sigh over these my mischances, but never mind, I do not feel them. My life is a shifting scene, and my business is to play the part allotted for each day well, and, not liking to think of tomorrow, I never think of it at all, except in an intellectual way; and as to money difficulties, why, having nothing, I can lose nothing. Thus, as far as regards what are called worldly concerns, I am perfectly tranquil, and as free or freer from care as if my signature should be able to draw £1000 from some banker. The extravagance and anger of Lord Byron's letters also relieve me from all pain that his dereliction might occasion me, and that his conscience twinges him is too visible from his impatient kicks and unmannerly curvetts. You would laugh at his last letter to Hunt, when he says concerning his connection with Shelley "that he let himself down to the level of the democrats."

In the meantime Hunt is all kindness, consideration, and friendship—all feeling of alienation towards me has disappeared even to its last dregs.<sup>6</sup> He perfectly approves of what I have done. So I am still in Italy, and I doubt not but that it is its sun and vivifying geniality that relieve me from those biting cares which would be mine in England, I fear, if I were destitute there. But I feel above the mark of Fortune, and my heart too much wounded to feel these pricks, on all occasions that do not regard its affections, *s'arma di se, e d'intero diamante*. Thus am I changed; too late, alas! for what ought to have been, but not too late, I trust, to enable me, more than before, to be some stay and consolation to my own dear Jane.

Mary.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 948–50; Marshall, II, 79–81; *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 66–67n (in part). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

## 184. *To Lord Byron*

Albaro, July 13 [1823]

Dear Lord Byron

I did not wish to spare myself the pain of taking leave. We understood from Conte Pietro today that you did not embark till tomorrow evening or mid-day at the earliest. I intended therefore to settle this pecuniary matter first by letter, there being better subjects for discourse in this world; & then to come down & bid you farewell, which I will do accordingly if you please, tomorrow morning.

<sup>5</sup> Trelawny replied on July 12: "Will you tell me what sum you want, as I am settling my affairs? You must from time to time let me know your wants, that I may do my best to relieve them. You are sure of me, so let us use no more words about it."—*The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 67.

<sup>6</sup> See Letter 162, note 3.

Mary W. Shelley

JULY 23, 1823 : 185

In the mean time as the message which Mad. Guiccioli has been kind enough to transmit to me, still leaves me an uneasy sense of vagueness in my mind, will you do me the favour to state in whose hands you have left this matter & what is its precise nature.

Yours sincerely [Unsigned]

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley Adds. d.5, f.86); A.L. (unsigned), 1 p. 4to (apparently a copy). PRINTED: R. B. Johnson, *Shelley—Leigh Hunt* (1928), 335–36. TEXT: From Mary's autograph copy.

185. To Jane Williams

Albaro, 23d July, 1823.

Dearest Jane,

I have at length fixed with the *vetturino*. I depart on the 25th, my best girl. I leave Italy; I return to the dreariest reality after having dreamt away a year in this blessed and beloved country.

Lord Byron, Trelawny, and Pierino Gamba sailed for Greece on the 17th inst. I did not see the former. His unconquerable avarice prevented his supplying me with money, and a remnant of shame caused him to avoid me. But I have a world of things to tell you on that score when I see you. If he were mean, Trelawny more than balanced the moral account. His whole conduct during his last stay here has impressed us all with an affectionate regard, and a perfect faith in the unalterable goodness of his heart. They sailed together; Lord Byron with £10,000, Trelawny with £50, and Lord Byron cowering before his eye for reasons you shall hear soon. The Guiccioli is gone to Bologna *e poi cosa farà? Chi lo sa? Cosa vuoi che lo dico!* He talks seriously of returning to her, and may, if he find none of equal rank to be got as cheaply; she cost him nothing, and was thus invaluable.

I travel without a servant. I rest first at Lyons; but do you write to me at Paris, Hotel Nelson. It will be a friend to await me. Alas! I have need of consolation. Hunt's kindness is now as active and warm as it was dormant before; but just as I find a companion in him I leave him. I leave him in all his difficulties, with his head throbbing with overwrought thoughts, and his frame sometimes sinking under his anxieties. Poor Marianne has found good medicine, *facendo un bimbo*, and then nursing it, but she, with her female providence, is more bent by care than Hunt. How much I wished, and wish, to settle near them at Florence; but I must submit with courage, and patience may at last come and give opiate to my irritable feelings.

Both Hunt and Trelawny say that Percy is much improved since Maria left me. He is affectionately attached to Sylvan, and very fond of *bimbo nuovo*. He kisses him by the hour, and tells me, *Come il Signore Enrico ha comprato un Baby nuovo—forse ti darà il Baby vecchio*, as he gives away an old toy on the appearance of a new one.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Henry Sylvan Hunt, the baby until the birth of Vincent on June 9, was about two and one-half years old. "Since Signore Henry has bought a new baby, perhaps he will give you the old baby."

I will not write longer. In conversation, nay, almost in thought, I can, at this most painful moment, force my excited feelings to laugh at themselves, and my spirits, raised by emotion, to seem as if they were light, but the natural current and real hue overflows me and penetrates me when I write, and it would be painful to you, and overthrow all my hopes of retaining my fortitude, if I were to write one word that truly translated the agitation I suffer into language.

I will write again from Lyons, where I suppose I shall be on the 3<sup>d</sup> of August. Dear Jane, can I render you happier than you are? The idea of that might console me, at least you will see one that truly loves you, and who is for ever your affectionately attached

Mary Shelley.

[P.S.] If there is any talk of my accommodations, pray tell Mrs. Gisborne that I cannot sleep on any but a *hard* bed. I care not how hard, so that it be a mattress.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 946-48; Moore, *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, 233-34 (11 lines); Marshall, II, 82-83; *The Letters of Edward I. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 68n (part only). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

## 186. To Leigh and Marianne Hunt

Asti, July 26th [1823]

Dearest Friends—Very Patient and Patient Very—

How do you do— I am very well—I think so—I think Percy is very well my boy is a good boy—I think so—you will receive this letter from your affectionate Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley I hope— I love you—I think I do— I love Henry Sylvan and Mary Florimel Leigh Hunt I hope—and so kiss her, one of you, if she be good—and Thornton also to whom I shall write soon—and Baby Nuovo—and the rest in a lump, scape grace Johnny, giggling Swinny, and Percy the Martyr.

My dear Hunt—I passed through very pretty scenery after leaving you at Rongo the ravine closed in, and the river wound gently under hanging woods.—As evening came on however the vale opened—we descended the staircase of hills and came to this wide landing place call[ed] Piedmont— The olives have gone—(not a leaf for Bessy)—the vines are stunts [ ] the wide, unhedged, undiversified—Such is the approach to Alessandria where [ ]—between that town and this we had some undulations, some trees, poplars [ ]—a wide river—greenish grass—cows and altogether a scene not unressembling what I remember of English scenery. Asti being the native town of Alfieri my attention was awakened to observe, the scenes of his childhood and I was pleased with these indications of the picturesque—but before arriving here the hills again disappeared—the town is low built and insignificant—and after trying all I could to believe that

an old wall was romantic and at length concluding that it was not, I find the prettiest thing about Asti is its name, Not that it is ugly—but it is plain and so different from my own Tuscany that [ ] I think nonsense not to be so sorrowful, than an Albaro scirocco with its blotted sky, wailing sea and howling wind, wd. be nothing to it.

Percy is very good and does not in the least *annoy* me— In the state of mind I am now in the motion and change is delightful to me—my thoughts run with the coach and wind and double and jerk and are up and down and forward and most often backward till the labyrinth of Crete is a joke in comparison to my intricate wanderings— They now lead me to you— Hunt you rose early—wrote—walked—dined whistled sang and punned most outrageously the worst puns in the world— My best Polly, you [were] full of your chicks and your new darling—yet sometimes called “Henry”—to see a beautiful effect of light on the mountains—did you indeed begin to cut a profile— “Oh Polly”.—Well, dear girl I have a great affection for you, believe that, and dont talk or think sorrowfully unless you have the toothach—and then dont think but talk infinite nonsense mixed with infinite sense—and Hunt will listen as I used— Thorny—you have not been cross yet— Oh my dear Thorny (dont be angry, Polly, with this nonsense) do not let your impatient nature ever overcome you—or you may suffer as I have done—which God forbid!—be true to yourself—and talk much to your father who will teach you as he taught me—it is the idea of his lessons of wisdom that makes me feel the affection I do for him.— I profit by them—so do you—may you never feel the remorse of having neglected them when his voice and look are gone, and he can no longer talk to you—that remorse is a terrible feeling—and it requires a faith and philosophy immense not to be destroyed by the stinging monster.

Johnny—I thought of two verses on you in the coach today—I send them that your papa may revenge himself for my disdainful laughing at his puns by laughing also disdainfully at this lame nonsense.

Well, Johnny how fares it with verses and puns—

Do your couplets or bon mots e’er win you a dinner?

Is Spenser still dearer than tartlets or buns?

Still hunting for thoughts, and in that race a winner?

Now think my dear Johnny, can jag rhyme with bad?

Or mischief and merrymen tag two good lines?

But, as you now see, bad answers to sad

And are very fair rhymes.

(Do you, Hunt, put in two words that rhyme—one meaning goodness the other mirth—I cant think of one for the life of me—laugh as much as you please.)

Good night—dear children—there is a howling wind—but I hope you are all asleep for it is on the stroke of eleven—again good night—I shall soon be asleep.

Sunday, [July 27]—7 o'clock P.M.

Safe arrived at Turin— The country between this and Asti is very pretty—meadows of green with cattle feeding, Hills covered with low vines or woods of poplar beech and ash streams and all that would remind you of England and for which reason you wd. like it— It is pretty and must have many delightful walks. The people about Turin are very ugly and such a costume [as] this [*a drawing illustrates*] is the head costume of the cantadine being made of stiff starched muslin—they all wear these caps—the citoyennes wear them also though of another fashion—less strange but not prettier— “Oh, very well Sir,”—Hunt, I wont be answered so— “Oh very well Sir!” Hunt, I pour out a glass of water— “Indeed Ma’am”—oh you feel the dash in your face and the water trickling from your hair down your innocent nose—but oh, the new jacket! What will Marianne say to naughty Grandmamma— Marianne is not in the way but moral Mary observes— “If ever I heard of rich— Well, this is one way I must say!”

“Well, I say nothing—but one thing I will say”—blessed the man who first invented baths—after the dusty roads I get into one and refresh myself most delightfully— At Asti they were miserable baths—here they were common warm water.—Plenty of linen, and the damage, Marianne, at Asti 32 soldi—here 33—including a handsome present to the attendants.

Tomorrow, dear absent ones, is the anniversary when 9 years ago I quitted England with Shelley—and now I return—never mind—sufferance is the badge of all our tribe— I will make an order of the badge and so it may feel lighter.

Do not wait for my letter from Lyons to write to me at Paris—but write Saturday August 2nd or if it better please you Monday 4th (Shelley's birthday) at latest— Direct to me at Hotel Nelson, Fauxbourg St. Germain

Farewell, my children—think kindly and often of the

Affectionate Grandmother<sup>1</sup>

Mary W. Shelley

What did Marianne say to my having left my watch—dont send it by any but a safe opportunity—and in the mean time I pray you get it mended, or it will be quite spoilt.

I hear voices, as you used to hear them at Pisa—they are in harmony and the bass is pleasing— My heart is a park well walled in with many doors. Many alas! have been locked too long—but Music is the Master key to all of them.

I shd. have tried to have got you some music here but it is Sunday and I

<sup>1</sup> A title which Mary assumed after the birth of Vincent Hunt.

go at day break tomorrow—at Lyons I will buy some—if there is any, and send it you by the vetturino when he returns— Adieu.

I was too late for the post yesterday evening at Turin, and too early this morning, so, as I determined to put this letter in the post myself, I bring it with me to Susa, and now open it to tell you how delighted I am with my mornings ride— The scenery is so divine—the high dark Alps first, on this southern side tipt with snow, close in a plain— The meadows are full of clover and flowers and the woods of ash elm and beech, descend and spread and lose themselves in the fields—stately trees in clumps or singly arise on each side, and wherever you look you see some spot where you dream of building a house and living for ever. The exquisite beauty of Nature and the cloudless sky of this summer day soothes me, and makes this 28th so full of recollections as it is, almost pleasurable. Wherever the spirit of beauty dwells he [Shelley] must be—the rustling of the trees is full of him—the waving of the tall grass—the moving shadows of the vast hills—the blue air that penetrates their ravines and rests upon their heights—I feel him near me when I see that which he best loved— Alas! nine years ago he took to a home in his heart this weak being, whom he has now left for more congenial spirits and happier regions. She lives only in the hope that she may become one day as one of them.

Absolutely, my dear Hunt, I will pass some 3 summer months in this divine spot—you shall all be with me—there are no gentlemen's seats or palazzi—so we will take a cottage which we will paint and refit—just as this country inn is in which I now write clean and plain— We will have no servants only we will give out all the needle work— Marianne shall make puddings and pies to make up for the vegetables and meat which I shall boil and spoil. Thorny shall sweep the rooms, Mary make the beds—Johnny clean the kettles and pans and then we will pop him into one of the many streams hereabouts and so clean him. Swinny, being so quick, shall be our Mercury—Percy our gardener—Sylvan and Percy Florence our weeders and Vincent our plaything—and then to raise above the vulgar we will do all our work keeping time to Hunt's symphonies we will perform our sweepings and dustings to the March in Alceste— We will go [to our] meals to the tune of the laughing trio and when we [are fatigued] will lie on our turf sophas while all who [have] voices shall [join in] chorus in "Notti e giorno faticar"— You see [that my pap]er is quite out so I must say for the last time, Adieu, God bless you.

Mary W. S.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Casa Negrotto/ Albaro/ Genova. POSTMARK: GENOVA/ 18. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: (All incomplete) *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 114–16 (latter part only); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 954–58; Marshall, II, 89–91. (Printed as two letters by *Shelley and Mary* and Marshall. Latter part dated 28 by *Relics* and Marshall.) TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

187. *To Jane Williams*

St. Jean de la Maurienne,  
July 30, 1823.

My best Jane,

I wrote to you from Genoa the day before I quitted it, but I afterwards lost the letter. I asked the Hunts to look for it, and send it if found, but ten to one you will never receive it.<sup>1</sup> It contained nothing, however, but what I can tell you in five minutes when I see you. It told you of the departure of Lord Byron and Trelawny for Greece, the former escaping with all his crowns, and the other disbursing until he had hardly £10 left. It went to my heart to borrow the sum from him necessary to make up my journey, but he behaved with so much quiet generosity that one was almost glad to put him to that proof, and witness the excellence of his heart. In this and in another trial he acquitted himself so well that he gained all our hearts, while the other—but more when we meet.

I left Genoa Thursday, 25th.<sup>2</sup> Hunt and Thornton accompanied me the first twenty miles. This was much, you will say, for Hunt. But, thank heaven, we are now the best friends in the world. He set his heart on my quitting Italy with as comfortable feelings as possible, and he did so much that notwithstanding all the [ ] and such an event, joined to parting with a dear friend, occasioned me, yet I have borne up with better spirits than I could in any way have hoped. It is a delightful thing, my dear Jane, to be able to express one's affection upon an old and tried friend like Hunt, and one so passionately attached to my Shelley as he was, and is. It is pleasant also to feel myself loved by one who loves me. You know somewhat of what I suffered during the winter, during his alienation from me. He was displeased with me for many just reasons, but he found me willing to expiate, as far as I could, the evil I had done, so his heart was again warmed; and if, my dear friend, when I return, you find me more amiable and more willing to suffer with patience than I was, it is to him that I owe this benefit, and you may judge if I ought not to be grateful to him. I am even so to Lord Byron, who was the cause that I stayed at Genoa, and thus secured one who, I am sure, can never change.

The illness of one of our horses detains me here an afternoon, so I write, and shall put the letter in the post at Chambéry. I have come without a servant or companion; but Percy is perfectly good, and no trouble to me at all. We are both well; a little tired or so. Will you tell my Father that you have heard from me, and that I am so far on my journey? I expect to be at Lyons in three days, and will write to him from that place. If there be any talk of my accommodations, pray put in a word for a *hard* bed, for else I am sure I cannot sleep.

So I have left Italy, and alone with my child I am travelling to England.

<sup>1</sup> Mary's letter of July 23 was found and sent. (See Letter 185).

<sup>2</sup> The twenty-fifth was a Friday.

What a dream I have had! and is it over? Oh no! for I do nothing but dream; realities seem to have lost all power over me,—I mean, as it were, mere tangible realities,—for, where the affections are concerned, calamity has only awakened greater sensitiveness.

I fear things do not go on well with you, my dearest girl! you are not in your mother's house, and you cannot have settled your affairs in India,—mine too! Why, I arrive poor to nothingness, and my hopes are small, except from my own exertions; and living in England is dear. My thoughts will all bend towards Italy; but even if Sir Timothy Shelley should do anything, he will not, I am sure, permit me to go abroad. At any rate we shall be together a while. We will talk of our lost ones, and think of realising my dream; who knows? Adieu, I shall soon see you, and you will find how truly I am your affectionate

Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 951–53; Moore, *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, 236–37 (34 lines); Marshall, II, 85–86. TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

### 188. *To Leigh Hunt*

St. Jean de la Maurienne, Savoy

July 30th [1823]

I am detained here, my dear children, a whole afternoon by the illness of one of the horses—the quiet solitude of the inn is painful to me so I try to forget myself in writing to you— Pardon me therefore, Very Patient, (if you read my letter through) and you, Patient Very (if you like it when read) that I write often. Consider I am at a dismal inn all alone—my heart is often on the point of sinking within me, but I strive with the foul fiend & take refuge in the idea of those I love; with my pen in my hand I can drive off the evil hour—& then sleep comes, then waking and once in the carriage I can defy the *devil*, for motion keeps up my spirits & sets my thoughts gadding at full gallop through all the regions of the *has been, is, & to be*.

I put my letter to you in the post at Susa & hope you will get it safe, but I think it runs some hazard of miscarrying— I put in one for Mrs. Mason at the same office & the post master asked me, where Pisa was? *dove è quella Pisa?* were his words. *Credat Christianus* (as Hunt says)—*ma è vecero*. I was not so much delighted with the passage of Mont Cenis as I expected, but this was because I had formed a wrong idea of it— Covered as it is for 8 months of the year with a heavy covering of snow, of course there can be no trees on its heights—but it is curious to see its crags, recesses & plains covered with luxuriant grass, & flowers; the excessive green & [? watriness] of these rocks, which seem themselves thawed into life, is a pleasant contrast to the snow many feet deep which was on them when we crossed them in the month of March [1818]. I am now however in the midst of the most divine scenery you



can imagine—or rather I was this morning, & know I shall be tomorrow, just this spot yields in beauty to several others— The immense mountains are covered with pine forests & a deep and rock-vexed river flows through the depth of the ravine through which we wind—the rocks themselves, except where quite perpendicular are covered with underwood & weeping willows & birch hang over the waterfalls which rush down through every fold of the mountain into the noisy & gurgling river. Above the pine covered sides of the mountains high & bare peaks arise, flecked with snow—while in the midst of the forests, meadows and glades of exquisite verdure are contrasted with the dark colour of the trees. I am pleased also with the inhabitants. The roundness & softness of their features is refreshing after the cut and dry aspect of the Italians. The latter, even the best looking among them, often seem as if they had walked out from a picture or down from a pedestal with just as much of soul as the canvas or marble can bestow; there is a sensitive look about the flesh of these people, which seems to have evaporated among the Southerns under the influence of their sun and when pretty they look good natured. They are very quiet too, no brawling no talking loud, so that a village seems a solitude, & in the very midst of one I have not heard the thousandth part of the noise which so annoys Marianne in one single family; I have heard a dispute or two today under my window—but it was carried on with gentleness and politeness & their most vigorous negative was—*vous avez raison, monsieur, mais ayez la bonté de réfléchir*:—Neither have they any of the scepticism of the Italians in their manners & tones. If they laugh it is with good humour, & they speak to you with the easy but perfect good breeding so common in France— The beggars even smile amiably if you give them rather more than they expect & say *bien obligée* with a really thankful air—while the Madame & Monsieur they use in common to all ranks from a princess to (literally) the beggar is a symbol that they claim kindred with & afford sympathy to all.

Such are my impressions hitherto, & you see that they art not in favour of the Italians. My vetturino who has only crossed Cenis once before is quite transported with the cordial reception & recognitions he meets with among these mountaineers— What will Marianne say?—will she think that I am turning traitress to dear Italy?—not so—the inhabitants were never favourites with me— I had been habituated to many of their defects until I was hardly aware of them, but the absence of them strikes as agreeable. Still I love & turn to Italy as the place where all my delights were centred & where I can feel most forcibly that I am still united to those I have lost—besides I like its country & the life & the daily habits one has there better than any others— Besides & besides I love Italy with all my heart & all my soul & all my might & all my strength (you know the catechism, Hunt) and all my hopes are centred in returning there.

I will tell you something I think droll. Near Cenis, & above it, is a high

mountain called the Mugone—the snows are yet upon its height, & the approach to the summit is difficult & must be made on foot—it requires a day to go and a day to return; when you arrive at the top you find a peak of naked rock and a little chapel with an image of the Madonna Nera. A great concourse of people flock to this height in the middle of August & *fanno festa*, people come even from as far as Turin to make holiday here. Now this pleases me—this is something like—one can conceive of animals, dogs & cows, going to pleasant places to enjoy themselves—but it belongs to that queer animal man alone, to toil up steep & perilous crags, to arrive at a bare peak; to sleep ill & fare worse, & then the next day to descend & call this a feast—the feast of the soul it must be— Now, dear Patient Very, is not this a trait after your own heart.

I have another thing to say, & even if you dont agree with me, you will pardon poor Grandmamma for her impertinence. I dont think you either of you saw Thornton's letter to Mr. Lamb—he begins it by saying that he is going to write to him & will tell him how the Genoese pass the day—he has then copied what, in its place, was cleverly written, a description of how the men women & children of Genoa pass the day—having copied this, he adds that he has nothing more to add but love to Miss Lamb &c.—not a word of his being in Ovid, of any of the things that it wd. please Lamb to hear— This is pure laziness, but as he does nothing but abuse the Genoese it might give Lamb a false idea of his character—had he not better write another letter—let him send it to me at Paris & it will be in time—& so now, if I have spoken out of season, forgive me—indeed I am sure you will, or I should not write as I do.

Percy has been writing a letter for Baby [Vincent]—he is now sealing it & then mounts on horseback (on a chair) to carry it—he has been very good & is no trouble to me at all—How are you all? My heart is with you—and I long to see if when in England I can do any thing to alleviate your cares.—When will the happy day come when we shall meet again?

Pont Bon Voisin,  
August 1st

After quitting St. Jean I got into a country I knew but too well—and one spot in particular, a wood covered knoll, I had walked on with S[helley] & my lost William. It was a rainy day too—but however to diversify the scene at mid-day I picked up two walking tourists, French gentlemen, who came on with me to Chamberi, glad to escape in my machine from the pouring rain—they were no great things but exceedingly good natured—and when I had resisted a piece of Percy's self-will successfully, the elder one, the father of 6 children, observed "Madame—vous avez du caractere."

All the scenery of Savoy is beautiful & I know it well— This morning's ride was perfectly delightful—after passing la Montagne des Eschelles, whose dark high precipices towering above, gave S[helley] the idea of his Pro-

metheus,<sup>1</sup> we wound along a ravine whose sides & rocks covered with trees & underwood are more picturesque even than the vale of the Alps & the river where not perfectly white with foam was of that green hue one often sees in Italian pictures—This scene, however, though bosky wanted the excessive richness of foliage of La Maurienne, and besides it wanted the higher mountains with their pine forests and naked peaks.

I am now just entered this town, one half of which belongs to Savoy and the other to France—it is divided by a river & a bridge on each side on [of] which the friendly centinels keep looking at each other & examining the effects of those who pass: the town has a good name for a frontier one—Pont Bon Voisin— I am now on the French side and have just had my effects *not* examined by the custom house officers—they were very polite & only just lifted up the lid of one box— It was droll enough however when the superior officer uttered a witticism & the man below him in office laughed, the superior rebuked him—saying *ne riez pas*—you ought not to laugh while employed on this business— “*Il vaut mieux rire que pleurer pourtant*”—replied the man—*non pas pleurer*—replied the other but you ought to be serious during your occupations.

[? The quiet] of these people still strikes me as very agreeable—I do not know how the English will seem—but the absence of loud voices violent gesticulation & eternal clack gives even to the lower orders an air [of] gentleness & good breeding that even the highest Italians want—I speak of the men particularly, having seen some of the male sex who have their hats properly on their heads and look almost like gentlemen.

Tomorrow I shall be at Lyons—thence to Paris I hope to proceed by a quicker mode of conveyance— I shall have letters from you there, that is one comfort— It seems a day since I left you, and yet it was this day week that I saw my poor Polly sleeping or pretending to sleep under net—and that I parted with patient Very, who entirely fulfilled the beau ideal of the character implied by that name.

Again & again how are you all, dear friends? & when do you go to Florence? And has my Polly walked yet and how go lessons & masters? & by the bye i miei saluti al Signor Agostino Ginocchio— Many kisses to all the children & particularly to Henry & baby nuovo—so no more at present from

Your affectionate Grandmother

Mary Wollstft Shelley.

[P.S.] Does Hunt send me a letter for Horace Smith

For fear that any accident may have happened to my Susa letter write to me at Paris immediately on the reception of this—directed at the Hôtel Nelson Faubourgh—St. Germain.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq/ Albaro/ Genova/ à Gênes-l'Italie. POSTMARK: GENOVA/ 6. AGO. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley Adds. d.5,

<sup>1</sup> This fact was not included in Mrs. Shelley's Note on *Prometheus Unbound* in 1839.

ff. 83-85); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 95 (1937), 412-15. TEXT: From original letter.

## 189. To Leigh Hunt

Lyons, Sunday, August 3 [1823]

My dear Hunt,

I arrived at Lyons yesterday evening and remain here until tuesday evening. This repose will, I trust, entirely restore Percy and will give me time, I hope to receive your letter, which is not yet arrived. I have taken my place in a public conveyance, not the Diligence. I shall travel all tuesday night and the day of Wednesday—and then repose a night and a day at Dijon—then again a night and day of travelling—the same of repose and sunday afternoon I arrive at Paris. This I dare say will appear to you a queer mode of proceeding, but it was the best I c[oul]d manage—I c[oul]d not think of travelling 3 successive days and nights—veturino travelling is detestable from the slowness of the motion—and posting w[oul]d be too expensive; but in this mode I unite cheapness swiftness and repose— “Indeed Ma’am”—well are not these two good things in travelling?— “Just so”—

I have sent you a Juvenal by my veturino who brought me here and now returns to Italy— I sought for English books but could find none so I only send a Paul and Virginia for Thornton. I send you also the Music of the “Clemenza di Tito”—it cost only 17 francs so I was tempted— I went to the Music shop to buy some for you, but my ignorance both of what I ought to buy, and what you have, so puzzled me, that I was glad to settle on safe ground in buying Mozart— Remembering my Polly’s preference I tried to get some of Handel, but there was none— You have “Ah! Perdona”—but I do not think that you have “Deh prendi un dolce amplesso”—and besides there must be many other things in an opera of Mozart. By the bye send me a list of what music you w[oul]d like to have—and what you have, that if I see any cheap I may know what I am about and tell me also the name of that air of Handel’s of which you are so fond—I do not mean, “He was despised and rejected of men”—but the other of which you know only a few notes.

Have you received my two letters one *impostata* at Susa, the other at Pont Bon Voisin—they will have shewn you how I got on during the first days— I look back with surprise to the tranquillity I was able to preserve at that time—but this is to be attributed to your kindness, my dear friend, for the idea of leaving affectionate hearts behind me consoled me; it still preserves in an outward and visible form the bond that must ever exist between me and Italy— Now I turn southward and ask: What are you doing?—if you are not a rebel against all your own diaphragmatic theories you are taking a long walk this fine evening—and you Marianne, have you not been out? How is Thorny’s temper, Johnny’s verses—Mary’s “deuce takeits,” Swinburne’s quiet looks, and serious attention while the Master is there, Percy’s martyrdom—Henry’s

"Magnificent eyes"—and little Vincent's gentle smiles?<sup>1</sup>—pray tell all and each that their exiled Grandmother will receive no greater pleasure than the news of their improvement— She sends them all a kiss— Percy wants to send Sylvan a play thing, but that must be reserved for England, he even says that if Baby—Henry—w[oul]d come here he w[oul]d give him his new barroccio.

From the quai here that overlooks the Rhone, we see Mont Blanc— This mountain is associated to me with many delightful hours— We lived under its eye at Geneva—and when at Lyons we looked with joy at its sublime *Dome*. It is in itself so magnificent—the utmost heights of Cenis and the Mungone were only flecked with snow— Mont Blanc has still on its huge mantle, and its *aiguilles* purer than the whitest marble, pierce the heaven around it—the sight of this might have given Michael Angelo a still finer idea of a "dome in the air" than the Pantheon itself. I wonder, my best friend, if in other planets and systems there are other sublimer objects and more lovely scenes to entrance Shelley with still greater delight than he felt at seeing these wondrous piles of earth's primæval matter—or does he only feel and see the beauties we contemplate with greater intensity— I fear that if he c[oul]d send us any of his Poetry from where he now is, the world w[oul]d find it more unintelligible and elementary than that which we have. He loved nature, so enthusiastically that one is irresistibly led to imagine his painless spirit among its divinest combinations— In society even of those he loved, I do not feel his presence so vividly as I do when I hear the wind among the trees;— when I see the shadows on the mountains—the sunshine in the ravines, or behold heaven and earth meet, when she arises towards it or the clouds descend to her. During the winter how horrible was the sound and look of the sea, but I began to love it and fancy him near it when it sparkled beneath the sun; yet after all, dear Hunt, I was surprised to find that I felt his presence more vividly during my journey through the ravines of the Alps, near the roar of the waterfalls and the "inland murmur"<sup>2</sup> of the precipitous rivers. How I sh[oul]d delight to make a tour with you among these scenes—feeling him and all about him as you do—still you w[oul]d know him better, if you visited these spots which he loved better than any others in the world.

(Tuesday, August 5th.) I have your letter and your excuses and all—I thank you most sincerely for it, at the same time I do entreat you to take care of yourself with regard to writing— Although your letters are worth infinite pleasure to me—yet that pleasure cannot be worth pain to you—and remember, if you must write, the good hacnied maxim of *multum in parvo* and when your temples throb distill the essence of 3 pages into three lines and my "fictitious Adventure" will enable me to spin them out and fill up intervals not but what the 3 pages are best—but "you understand me"— And now let me

<sup>1</sup> Hunt's seven children are listed here chronologically.

<sup>2</sup> Wordsworth, *Lines . . . Above Tintern Abbey*, line 4.

tell you that I fear you do not rise early since you doubt my *ore matutine*, be it known to you then, that on the journey I always rose *before* 3 o'clock that I *never* once made the veturino wait—and moreover that there was no discontent in our jogging on, on either side—so that I half expect to be a *Santa* with him— He indeed got a little out of his element when he got into France—his good humor did not leave him but his self possession he c[oul]d not speak French and he walked about as if treading on eggs.

When at Paris I will tell you more what I think of the French— They still seem miracles of quietness in comparison with Marianne's noisy friends; and the women's dresses afford the drollest contrast with those in fashion when I first set foot in Paris in 1814—then their waists were between their shoulders and as Hogg observed they wore rather curtains than gowns. Their hair too, dragged to the top of the head and then lifted to its height appeared as if each female wished to be a tower of Babel in herself—now their waists [are] long (not so long however as the Genoese) and their hair flat at the top with quantities of curls on the temples— I remember in 1814 a frenchman's pathetic horror at Claire's and my appearance in the streets of Paris in Oldenburgh (at they were called) hats—now they all wear machines of that shape and a high bonnet w[oul]d of course be as far out of the right road as if the earth were to take a flying leap to another system.

After you receive this letter you must direct to me to my fathers—(pray put W. G. Esq.) since the want of that etiquette annoys him— I remember Shelley's unspeakable astonishment when the Author of Political Justice asked him half reproachfully why he addressed him "Mr." G.) 195 Strand—and since the 21st is the day I suppose I ought to write to Florence, however when in Paris I will calculate the time and direct accordingly. Remember Via del Fonda— I will send you the number of the House from Paris—I think it was called Palazzo Morano or Morandi<sup>3</sup>—but the number will settle that.

Well, my dear Hunt, I must not clack any more or Marianne will think me as bad as Marin—except that you can silence me by not reading me— I hope you have taken measures that Mrs. Mason sh[oul]d have Valperga— Do you write a criticism of it?—if ever I write another novel it will be better worth your criticism and more pleasing to you than this. After all Valperga is merely a book of promise, another landing place in the staircase I am climbing — I often think of Alfred and of *Triamond*—you must send me the list of books I must consult for it.

I hope Marianne thinks of me with kindness—and that the [ ] children remember me— Percy was playing at playing with Henry all day yesterday and generously gave the shadow all his play things— How are Polly's nerves and the bell and the empty house and how goes on the jacket—the jacket with the definite article—has Henry yet profaned it with fruit soiled

<sup>3</sup> 4395 Via Valfonda, Pallazo Marini, Florence, where the Shelleys lived during October–January, 1819–20.

hands?— God bless you all—and bless you, dear Hunt, for all the good you have done me—do me and are about to do—

Faithfully yours

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] The veturino will take my packet to Mrs. Heslops, will Marianne tell her to give him a livre or two for his trouble— I saw a letter to Lord C. Murray in the Post Office here today—can he have returned or not gone— Percy has just informed me with a laugh “Mary dice mio mano—Mary non dice mia mano”—while chattering to himself in the coach he tells long stories of “Una che andava su un albero per cercar un gatto”—

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Albaro,/ Genova,/ Gênes-L'Italie. POSTMARKS: (1) P. 68. P/ LYONS (2) GENOVA/ 13. AGO. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 116–22 (omits postscript); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 958–63; Marshall, II, 91–92 (a portion of the August 5 part only). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 190. *To Leigh Hunt*

Dijon, August 7 [1823]

Well, my dear Hunt, how do you do? I am Mary Shelley I hope—though like the little woman in the story book—I begin to doubt “if I be I”—I am & I was so-so tired— Well I have bidden adieu to night travelling & public conveyances in France— Such a machine—figure to yourself a thing worse far worse than the worst, worst English heavy coaches—so dirty— Well, I got into it— The man had deceived me and shewed me better so I was not prepared— I got in & the first thing I did was to dash away a foolish tear and the second to philosophize—Have I not promised Hunt to be patient, & will he not be pleased if I am?—Then I thought—when in a garden or a wood or a palace one can fancy the plants, the trees or the encrusted walls a part of us, but in such a place as this one must confine ones identity to the small sphere of one’s own person—here am I and my boy—entire, well—with a little atmosphere around us, that nothing may touch—then I thought how I might be worse off, and recollected what I had seen that morning—a poor young woman arrive in the diligence with [a] child on her knee which she was evidently nursing, looking so tired with a pink hectic flush on her cheek—so suffering & yet so patient— Thinking of this I began to [be] ashamed of wanting philosophy—I thought that I might if I chose be the Sultanness you wished me to be—I would make myself a downy couch of pleasant thoughts—my wishes sh[oul]d be my coursers & my attendants a thousand memories & gentle feelings— So I got over my disgust—but all w[oul]d not do to conquer real inconveniences—the uneasy position—my child asleep on my knees, put me into such pain & exhausted me so greatly that I was more dead than alive in the morning—& most *philosophically* determined not to endure such another night. By the evening, we arrived here—where I have slept & although bruised and battered, non cè male—so I have engaged a veturino and shall

jog on in my old style— The carriage is a good one however, & I shall be alone—& solitude is company—for I never feel so perfectly *lonely* as when, among a crowd, I feel the want of that protection to which I have been used. How I felt this at Lyons—in the coach they were jog trot people & perfectly civil—but a wretch—such a wretch at Lyons had the impudence to say something to me—I did not *say* a word, which I dare say you will think was saying my worst—but there are certain situations that one never foresees as possible, and so one is perfectly unprepared—I startled my gentleman however, who muttered something about my not understanding French & left me—to be a goose—& weep— Well that is over too—

The Inn at Lyons was a very nice one & very cheap & the people civil though my solitary mode of proceeding somewhat surprises them—and a servant would in that way have been a convenience to me—though as far as trouble & Percy goes she w[oul]d not have been of the least use— I now go *veturino* again & shall be in Paris in five day[s], I hope.—I have engaged my carriage however only for Auxerre, where I arrive Saturday evening—& I may find it as cheap to post thence to Paris.—Although I would not risk another night & day's journey like the last, yet it is pleasant to look back & find that I have done a five days work in 24 hours—but it [is] no joke to be taken really ill at 2 in the morning on a desert road, with rain & muddy roads—and other people in the machine & all kinds of discomfort around one—

I have not written today however, my dear friend, to give you an account of my disasters—now over—but to correct a mistake in my Lyons' letter—I told you in that to direct in future to the Strand—which was a dreary oversight on my part—as soon as you know that I am arrived my letters there will be safe—for I shall get them early the moment they come but in my absence, unless you write for Mrs. G[odwin]'s most certain and attentive perusal, do not send any letters there. The best place w[oul]d be perhaps at your brother John's—as I shall have probably an account with him & he is a man of business—& also this will only be for a short time—until I am settled—direct therefore to London in future, as I shall to Florence unless I hear from you to the contrary—

And so my dear Polly is overwhelmed with packing, meddling chicks & disobedient, clacking servants— Heaven get you safe through it, my best Polly—safe to Florence,<sup>1</sup> where you may set up the ark of your rest & be at peace for one while. Passing through the plain of Lucca & the Val di Nievole you will see much of the scenery of Valperga— If you stay to *rinfrascare* there, my dear friend—go to the top of the tower of the palace of Guinigi an old tower as ancient as those times—look towards the opening of the hills, on the road to the Baths of Lucca, & on the banks of the Serchio & you will see the site of Valperga; and towards the west you will see a dark wood where they will tell you there are the ruins of a castle which Castruccio built—& that

<sup>1</sup> The Hunts left Genoa for Florence on August 22.



wood is the scene of the incantations where Castruccio and Tripalda appear—If you have time you can go to the church of San Franceno—then fuore now dentro delle mura & half way up the aisle on the right hand side you will see on the wall a slab to the memory of Castruccio & underneath this newer one the little old one which contains the inscription I have quoted.

Have you heard any news—I heard some very displeasing to me—the Basilica of San Paolo fuore delle mura at Rome was burned down—because the geese must needs roof it with the cedar of Lebanon—& of the 24 stupendous marble columns taken from the tomb of Adrian, which in height perfection, & the exquisitely beautiful lilac tinge of the marble, were unequalled in the world, are all calcined & destroyed, one only excepted— Thus time & his servitor destruction are still at work to efface the [ ? traces (*seal*) ] of the men of ancient times & our children will see less than we have seen—unless Herculeum is dug out—d-e—by-by-d-

The other news is that the F. want to make peace in S. That the "Gallant General" is holding out at Casagne & has been wounded & in a letter published of his to another town in Spain shews himself indeed *the* "Gallant General"— And how goes on our "Gallant Bard" & his crowns & his helmets & his Bolivar canon—& he, worth all a thousand times more, his companion<sup>2</sup>—you say there is a letter for me from him<sup>3</sup>—I am glad of this—& tell me too what you have done with his letter to Mrs. W. that I left with you. If you have read it (& you may) you will see that it ought to be delivered—perhaps Mrs. Thomas might—or if Mrs. Heslop w[oul]d give it into her own hands it will do—

You see, when I get a pen, and have plenty of time on my hands how I run on & fill my paper—are these "gigantic paragraphs"<sup>4</sup>—you see I have a memory—I have indeed, my very dear friend—or my dear friend, very, I will remember all you have told me, all you have taught me, & besides I will bear in mind to love you & yours to the last day of my life—

So now with a grandmother's blessing to your children, and a Great grandmother's fondest blessing to you and Marianne, I bid you be good children & to take care of your respective healths—Hunt ought to take a little quassia every morning—& Marianne a little egg flip every night— This is in the right style is it not—however really and truly follow my advice & you may be the better for it. Shelley found quassia very good—it strengthens the digestion

<sup>2</sup> Byron; his companion, Trelawny. Hunt explained the helmets: "These three helmets he [Byron] had got up in honour of his going to war and as harbingers of achievement. They were of the proper classical shape, gilt, and had his motto 'Crede Byron.' One was for himself, and the two others were destined to illustrate the heads of the Count Pietro and Mr. Trelawny, who, I believe, declined the honour."—Leigh Hunt, *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries* (London, Henry Colburn, 1828), 70. See also Letter 195, note 3. Count Gamba says that the boat on which they sailed for Greece had two one-pound cannon from Byron's *Bolivar* and that Byron carried with him "10,000 Spanish dollars in ready money, and bills of exchange for forty thousand more."

<sup>3</sup> Written at Leghorn, July 23; printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 950–51.

<sup>4</sup> See Letter 73, note 7.

—put a tea spoonful of the shavings into a glass of cold water when you go to bed & the next morning before you dress drain the water & drink it—just try this—or put half a pound in a bottle of madeira wine & take a wine glassful half an hour before dinner—now laugh as I do at my own—not nonsense but sense for it may do you a great deal of good—adieu—I depart at 1 o'clock P.M.—it is now 11 A.M.—

Your respectable aïeule,  
Mary W S.

[P.S.] If you write any letters on the journey pray follow my example & put them in the post yourself— People of inns never put them in any place but the fire—and the money in their pockets— What think you of this for a witticism—rather stale—but it will do for a beginner—

Only think of a hand organ & a miserable French tune—oh! Italy!

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esq./ Albaro, Genoa,/ Gênes-l'Italie. POSTMARK: 18. AGOSTO. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley Adds. d.5, ff.67–68); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: R. B. Johnson, *Shelley—Leigh Hunt* (1928), 338–42 (omits postscript). TEXT: From original letter.

## 191. To Jane Williams

Paris, August 13, 1823

Dearest Jane,

Your letter advising me to remain in Italy reached me here; at first it made me very melancholy, thinking that I might have remained where my heart still is; but reflection has led me to the same decision as that which leads me to London; and your arguments are so many more in favour of my journey. I have indeed no hopes from Sir Timothy Shelley, and of course should not seek to see him. In his letter to Lord Byron, he said that he would provide for my Boy if in England, and with anyone of whom he should approve. I dare say he will stick fast to the last condition, and so make the other null. You say, dear girl, that my *friends* might dispose of my writings for me; but will you tell me which? You are coming away. My Father has never made the slightest offer of the kind, and, on the contrary, has evidently *slink*ed from the office. The Gisbornes are the only people in England who have offered their services, and a thousand reasons make them little fit. It is far less easy to do things by letter than you imagine. As to a periodical publication with Hunt, his situation is extremely precarious just now, and he feels it so—so much so, that, although I *know* that my remaining would have pleased him, yet he never urged more than my speedy return. It is for that I shall strain every nerve, to return if possible with you in the spring. What say you, my friend? If I can get anything, I will get a sufficiency for the journey. I shall leave my father-in-law without excuse. I shall arrange for the publication of my Shelley's manuscripts. I shall establish a correspondence with a bookseller. And

perhaps (but this is a last, and with a most hypothetical *perhaps*), I may, as I doubt not that the will is valid, raise at a great loss, some little sum, say 50 *l.*, or even less per annum; which will just help me on, and render the task of self-maintenance more easy. Your argument is, that my friends could do all this. My dear child, I have waited a whole year for these friends, but they are not even yet in embryo; so I am like the Farmer in the fable of "The Lark and her Young Ones," now going to take the harvest into my own hands, and if in any way I only reap tares, why now I do not even get straw. I have three good friends in the world, and I ought to be content since they are proof. I have you, dear girl! You, I trust, love me. I have Hunt who, with his characteristic enthusiasm, has me now as much at heart as I was out of it a little while ago. And I have Trelawney, by whose aid I made up the money sufficient to come to England. And when I tell you all of him that I can, in addition to what you know already, you will have admiration for "the rough outside, with the gentle heart."

I hope, also, when in England, to be of use to Hunt, and arrange his affairs for him. Thus I consider this a visit only, and all my hope and trust will be to return with you. In the meantime, I will not repine; Fortune is adverse to me, but nothing that has to do with money shall draw a tear from my eye [*two and one-half lines are cut out of the page*] make him<sup>1</sup> happy where he is now, if he can be conscious of my constancy and patience.

You talk of Hunt's means being mine, in disposing of his works. Why, he has none, except through his brother, and he depends much on my personal interference, even in that quarter. It is so impossible to do anything in absence, except through the help of a zealous friend. Thus all has combined to lead me to England. May all equally combine, in a few months' time, to send me out of it! I shall not send this letter until I have settled the period of my leaving Paris.<sup>2</sup> I am much knocked up by my journey, and during the last two days was really ill with fever, which has gone off after a night's repose, but left me very weak; so I must collect a little strength, when I shall try to see Horace Smith, and then for England, with prospects as cloudy as the sky, and with the expectation of but one pleasant sensation—that of seeing you. Tell me, my best girl, shall we not return to Italy together?

Your commission is not fulfilled, as it ought to have been, from the reason you guess. I had, however, bought Mrs. Godwin a gown of common twilled silk, and that you shall have. Adieu! Bless you, dearest, and your babes. Percy asks, if "Dina è in Inghilterra?"

Thinking again, I will put my letter into the post to-day, that you may know and inform my Father that I arrived in Paris last night. I shall write to him when I have fixed the date of my departure. Adieu! My heart is heavy

<sup>1</sup> That is, Shelley.

<sup>2</sup> Mary arrived in Paris on the night of the twelfth.

after all! My great consolation is, that my Boy is well. Will you tell the Gisbornes how soon I hope to see them?

Ever affectionately yours,  
Mary Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 968–70; Moore, *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, 243 (9 lines). TEXT: From *Shelley and Mary*.

## 192. To Leigh and Marianne Hunt

Paris—August 13th [1823]

My dear Friends

I arrived here last night quite *knocked down* (as a Genevese dr. used to say, meaning knocked up—he understood a little English, & wished to speak it idiomatically)— I could hardly get on during the last two days, exhaustion having brought on fever—and all caused by that odious diligence and those delightful warm baths. A night's good rest has much restored me, & I am about to sally forth, to seek for other letters from Italy, & send mine to H[enry] L[eigh Hunt]—

The letter from Jane was full of advice to me to *remain* in Italy—she says that she hopes that she shall arrange her affairs in November & will return in the Spring— I shall work hard to return with her—and once more there, with the security of obtaining the little I want, the rest may go to the winds and Sir T[imothy] S[helley] live to the age of Methuselah if he will—in the mean time “Rabshaka” (how do you spell his name, pray tell me the book chap. & v.) “sat on a wall.”<sup>1</sup> What say you, shall I not by next summer hear Ah Perdona sung by one who sings it better than all the opera singers in the world, my favourite David included (Marianne will allow this piece of praise, I know, without calling it *flattery*—I have heard her say as much—and other people *have their ears about* them.) It warms my heart to think of this; for England is not an ice house to receive or give sunbeams, but one to freeze all pleasure and emotion. Poor Jane says, alluding to your, Hunt, affectionate zeal for me with the D. in M. Stores. “I glory in Hunt's manly and spirited conduct, he was indeed worthy to be the chosen friend of our S[helley] and this is (& I know he will think so) the ne plus ultra of all praise”— There is more *flattery*, Polly—but it is not mine, you know. I confine my praise to smaller matters—*Hesperian* curls—the front of—Mont Blanc—the Apollo's throat (that's Thornton) the hands of King Solomon & the (last but not *least*) *Left Leg*—all other perfections are Marianne's; witness THE Jacket.—Well Jane's letter made me melancholy thinking that some one thought I might have been spared this journey—yet I could not—but I trust & hope to accompany her on her return.

My amiable teacher, do not fear to annoy me by your didactics, & above all

<sup>1</sup> Rabshakeh. The passage is misquoted. See II Kings, 18:17–37, especially verse 26.

be assured that they will be religiously attended to. Marianne pays a compliment to my understanding on account of my attention to your admonitions—I am afraid affection & (strange to say) pride, had as much to do with it as understanding. My affection led me to wish to please you; pride made me glory in feeling that I had a friend who would tell me the whole truth, & in so earnest & kind a manner too—& understanding came in at the fag end to tell me that all you said was just and that I could only become worthy of *him* by following your lessons. So you see you may take courage, since affection & pride are your allies & reason your mate.

I wish you had opened Trelawny's letter—(I am unscrupulous about T's letters because he shews all his & I never write a word to him that I do not expect to be read by those near him) it would only have shewn you trusting—not "curious"—but sure that I had no secrets or reserve I wd send it to you, but there is not enough in it to render that worth while. It is full of kindness—& discontent that he cannot aid me more than he has. He mentions that he wishes that you wd insert in the Examiner the dates of their departure with his name, as he wishes his friends to know where he is, tho' he does not write to them.<sup>2</sup> He adds "Say all that is kind to Hunt<sup>x</sup> & Marianne from me—they

<sup>x</sup>I have been interrupted just here by some Italians coming into the Court Yd of the inn & playing & singing Italian airs—they sang a *buona notte* set to an air Jane used to sing.—"And I also lived in Italy!"

have no friend so anxious about them as I am—or would do so much to serve them, let them put me to the proof when they like—for 'tis unpleasant talking of these things."—he says that L[ord] B[yron] disembarked at Leghorn only for a few hours adding: "his attention and professed kindness to me is boundness [*sic*], he leaves every thing to my direction—if I had confidence in him this wd be well—but I now only see the black side of it—it will eventually possibly rob me of my free agency—so weaving me in with his fortunes that I may have difficulty in seperating myself from them"—His letter is desponding—but I hope he will get up his spirits when he enters into action.

I made acquaintance on the road with the English family I mentioned in my letter to Marianne; I recommended them to this Hotel & they are now under the same roof with me: they are very polite & pleasant. I like her particularly—she has that attractive mark of *un' anima gentile* a gentle sweet voice which is a heavenly grace both in the *frail & immaculate sect*. She has delighted me just now by telling me that she is passionately fond of gardening—they have 6 children—all boys, Polly—one Henry—who is the prettiest, but Percy is faithful to the Albaro Henry & says—"Voglio Henry—non Henry calzonni, ma Henry senza calzone Henry Baby"—She looks so young & fresh

<sup>2</sup> On July 23 Trelawny wrote from Leghorn: "I now curse and execrate my destiny, that compels me to leave you so ill-provided for so difficult a situation. . . . Ask Hunt to mention the fact of our embarkation and sailing in the 'Examiner,' with dates, &c., as I wish my friends to know where I am, but have not written a line to any of them."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 950–51.

that it seems to me impossible that she can be the mother of all—she cannot be more than seven & twenty—yet she nurses them herself—she is rather pretty & quite unaffected—he is good natural but *nullo* & none of the 6 except Henry, who takes after her, are attractive. Why do I tell you all this about strangers—why because I talk to you of the Alps—the fields & the woods—because I talk to you of all I see & hear, & thus keep up my intercourse which methinks would be spoilt if I did not chat about every thing. And besides Hunt will like to hear of her since, hearing that I went on my lonely way, she was impelled by her good nature to offer her services to one who *seemed* forlorn.

Thursday 14th—4 oclk. P.M.

I have just had a visit from H[orace] S[mith]<sup>3</sup>—who was very polite & kind— He says that there is a great outcry against the new Cantos of D[on] J[uan]<sup>4</sup> & they have a limited sale— He does not know much English news, except that they brought out Frankenstein at the Lyceum<sup>5</sup> and vivified the monster in such a manner as caused the ladies to faint away & a hubbub to ensue—however they diminished the horrors in the sequel, & it is having a run—he enquired kindly about you all, and asked me to come to stay at Versailles during the time I waited before going to England—excusing Mrs. S[mith]'s not calling [in] that she was not well—he pressed so much that I promised to dine with him tomorrow.—I have spent the morning seeing sights with the English family I mentioned— The only thing worth seeing was the Pantheon which is pretty— I saw some modern french pictures which are perfectly odious—& to Italian eyes painful.—I have bought Mrs. Hunter<sup>6</sup> a mother of pearl toothpick, very pretty—value 3 franks— How I longed for as many napoleons to throw away in nick knacks, all elegant, & yet which wd have all be[en] useful to you—but I did not dare begin making purchases—Percy runs by my side in all these promenades like a little dog, & does not seem to tire I asked him whether you should send him his whip (the loss of which no other replaced to his mind) or whether he would give it to Henry—he says—che mi lo manda—compra Henry un'altra—ma non si trova belle fruste tante in questo paese—his journey has made him understand what a paese is, & he logically described it saying—Mamma—quando ci sono molte case, molte, molte, questo è un paese—

Well, Thorny, I have not had your ps yet—how are you all my dears— Arrived in Florence safe & well?— How do you like the Venus, how the Niobe how the St. John in the desert—how all you have seen? Welcome—

<sup>3</sup> In 1821 Horace Smith had retired from business to begin a literary life. Late in June, 1821, he had started on his way to Italy, to live in Florence near Shelley, who searched for a suitable house for his friend. But when Smith's wife became quite ill in Paris, it was necessary to give up the journey to Italy, even though the furniture had already been shipped to Leghorn.

<sup>4</sup> Cantos VI–VIII, published July 15, 1823.

<sup>5</sup> See Letter 194, note 2.

<sup>6</sup> Marianne Hunt's mother, who had married Rowland Hunter, bookseller in St. Paul's Church-yard.

welcome to Fiorenza mia—welcome out of stone walls, solitude & the union of voices welcome to C[harles] Brown & Cartin—to [Joseph] Severn—to the Cascini. I have received your letter of the 4th of August, dear Hunt, and thank you a thousand times for it—you know how to pour balms into the wounds, I was going to say you make, but that is not just—the wounds were there deep & incurable till you medecined them— Can one's own heart ever deceive one? but I will not enter on so melancholy a subject—thank you—& be happy in the thought of the good you have done—Many happy returns to me? And what to you, dear ones? What happiness for the coming year? Marianne with restored health?—Walks by the Arno—along the Cascini—where We often walked & were enchanted by all we saw. The Gallery—the Pitti palace—the opera—studious mornings, out of door afternoons—social evenings—if it were not for odious cares?—Yet do not think so much of futurity—“sufficient for the day &c— What dreams & prospects I formed—& all now dust—but as evil destroys good, so may good be at times the victor, & who knows the unborn events of a winter that lowers on me with most ungentle aspect—but all changes, & if “in the mean time “Rabshacha sits on a wall” why he might sit lower & the broken masonry might bruise the flesh & the shaken limbs be unable to rise—true—true—much of this is—but a torso of the Ancients is better than a gallery of sound limbed dainty unharmed modern blocks—some of the fragments of an image of unspeakable beauty (our re-union at Pugnano) some glorious relics survive, let us treasure, preserve, glue, join—as an old maid her china, & we will get cups for our water if our wine be indeed all spilt.

I go on talking—alone in the evening can I do better than collect you<sup>7</sup> around me. Besides I am still this side (there is but one *this* side) of the Channel— Postage is still tolerably cheap, and I may run a little riot with my paper as well as my words. In England I must think how to save twopence postage by putting two thoughts instead of one into a sentence, and weep, like Milton's devils, from “gigantic paragraphs”—into such full, overflowing, pressing down of the measure, that each word will be a three volumed novel. For instance in my very direction when I write Florence F will stand for friend & friend will mean affection & wishes & hopes—I—may be *left leg*—for Leigh—for length. O-O!!! will be an exclamation that will do express wonder at no letters—wonder at many letters—wonder of all sorts—I will not talk more nonsense (if I can help it) finish, Johnny, the many meaning[s] F.l.o.r.e.n.c.e. may imply—or Hunt—do you in the French style write 8 verses each beginning with these letters in succession, & let us see what you can make of it—

This letter will go tomorrow before I go to Versailles—so you will have another letter from me at Paris—and then I enter the enchanted Island or rather the Isle where all enchantments cease—where there is no sun & if by

<sup>7</sup> Up to this point the letter is from the Huntington Library MS HM 11631; the remainder is from the British Museum Add. MSS 38, 523, f.75.

chance for a few hours the heaven be free from clouds the dun sky [*word blotted*] washed—at least so it is here— Where instead of originals pictures [*?are*] copies—brick houses for stone palaces, for marble statues, plaster casts — Now dont be tiresome Marianne & say you wd. like the exchange—my heart echoes back in every beat, a passage of poor Jane's letter—"a cottage in Italy with bread & fruit is better than a dukedom in this dismal country"— I like contrasts—I dont like snow in the winter & rain in the summer—but ice when the sun shines—and serene January's, nature reposing from her autumnal fertility, not dying as with us—covering herself with her pall of virgin white & shaking her hairless tresses (there is a bull—but what are foliageless trees) under a tyrant wind.—I do talk on in spite of myself & am angry with myself—if Very patient & Patient Very do not both patronize my clack I never will clack more, I wont—and revenge myself by making myself unhappy— Good night I tell you— It is late, naughty children Why will you keep you[r] poor great grandmother up so long—you will have a headache, Hunt;—as for you Polly, you may sit up with greater impunity—and so I will spend a few minutes more with you now MODEST Hunt has crept under the zanzaliera— How are you, dear girl?—& how is he? Is he ever cross & silent? if he is just throw a glass of water at him only take care of the Jacket—the same recipe may not be amiss for Thorny if he can't write the *ps*. For Mary & Johnny a ducking alone will do— How are Henrys (*?lampes*)—& Vincent, whom I declare is as much mine as yours—and if he turns out all his gentle smiles promise I will prove this— Why I *might* have taken him away who wd. have hindered me just then?—& what does Irving say to all the "treasures of his art." And how go the crowns—and the chaste caresses—and the [*? bragings*]—& veal & ham pies—Oh Polly—I hope you have deposited all your nervous feeling in that empty house—and the bell will ring a joyful farewell for you as you go away— Good night now, my Polly—and be not, I conjure you, offended at any of my nonsense—absence seems to give one a right to be wilful, & I am not Very patient or Patient Very—but, alas! very impatient & impatient very & this may make me say all things other than I mean—if I say any thing that can give you pain—

Affectionately your Exiled Grandmother, & *very* true friend

Mary Sh.

[P.S.] You did quite right H[unt] to enumerate your letters— This is my 6th. [*? I received*] 1 from you at Lyons, & 2 at Paris & I's and T's— I think H[orace] S[mith] looks *younger* than when I saw him last—

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze—Toscana/ Florence—  
 Italic. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 11631, the first 4 pages) and British  
 Museum (Add. MSS 38, 523, f.75, the last 2 pages); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4 to.  
 UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.



## 193. To Leigh Hunt

August 18th [1823] Paris.

My dear Hunt

I have just returned from spending three days at Versailles.<sup>1</sup> I went to dine & sleep one night, and the Kenny's<sup>2</sup> being there, & my dining at their house, made me remain a day longer than I intended. H[orace] S[mith] was very polite as was also Mrs. S[mith] who in truth is in very delicate health; besides Eliza & Horace they have only one child<sup>3</sup> a little girl 2½ years old, all life and spirits & chattering. Eliza is at home, she seems a nice girl enough, and H. S. seems happy in his domestic circle, pleased with France which Mrs. S. is not, so they will return to England—God knows when! I was pleased to see the Kenny's, especially Kenny, since he is much, dear Hunt, in your circle and I asked him accordingly a number of questions. They have an immense family, and a little house quite full—and in the midst of a horde of uninteresting beings, one graceful & amiable creature, Louisa Holcroft—the eldest of Holcroft's girls by Mrs. Kenny—she is now I suppose about two & twenty, she attends to the whole family and her gentleness & sweetness seems the spirit to set all right— I like to see her & Kenny together, they appear so affectionately attached— You w[oul]d like to see them too; very pretty with bright eyes & animated but unaffected & simple manners, her blushes cover her cheeks whenever she speaks, or whenever Mamma is going to tell an unlucky story, which she has vainly endeavoured to interrupt with— "Oh, Mamma, not *that*."—Kenny has just brought out an extremely successful opera at the Haymarket<sup>4</sup>— It was to have been played at Drury Lane but "Constantia gone! Amazement!" (I made them laugh by telling them this) refused to act if he did not have Elliston's part, which c[oul]d not be conceded to him. Poor Kenny is in spirits at the success of his piece, and is not half so nervous as he was, neither apparently or really, as Louisa tells me. I have a sort of instinctive liking for these *Authors*, & besides was glad to talk of something with a person of observation after having exhausted my Nothings with Mrs. S[mith]—so Louisa, Kenny and I drew together in a corner & talked first of the Godwins & then of the Lambs: I will reverse this order in writing of them to you.

Two years ago the Lambs made an excursion to France.<sup>5</sup> When at Amiens

<sup>1</sup> Visiting Horace Smith.

<sup>2</sup> James Kenney (1780–1849) was a prolific and fairly successful dramatist who had been producing since 1803. He married Louisa Mercier, widow of Thomas Holcroft (d. 1809). Her daughter Louisa Holcroft lived with them at Bellevue, near Paris, where they had been since 1821.

<sup>3</sup> Rosalind, born April 6, 1821.

<sup>4</sup> *Sweethearts and Wives*, produced at the Haymarket on July 7, 1823, ran for 51 nights.

<sup>5</sup> The Lambs visited Paris in 1822 (not "two years ago"). They left London on June 18. As Mary relates, Mary Lamb became ill on the way. Putting her in careful hands, Lamb came on to Versailles and visited the Kennys. He returned without his sister, who, recovering, remained for a week or more (beginning August 18) with the Kennys and, with the help of Crabb Robinson and John Howard Payne, saw a good deal of Paris. By September 11 she was back in London. Details of this trip are rather meagre. See E. V. Lucas, *The Life of Charles Lamb* (London, Methuen & Co., 1910), 487–91.

poor Miss L[amb] was taken ill in her usual way, and Lamb was in despair, he met however with some acquaintances, who got Miss L. into proper hands & L. came on to Versailles and staid with the Kenny's, going on very well, if the French wine had not been too good for him, so I found him no favorite with the S[mith]s. Poor Miss Lamb is again ill just now. They have been moving, renouncing town & country house to take one which was neither or either—at Islington, I think they said. Kenny was loud in her praise, saying that he thought her a faultless creature—possessing every virtue under heaven. He was annoyed to find L[amb] more reserved & shut up than usual—avoiding his old friends & not so cordial or amiable as his wont— I asked him about Hazlitt— This love-sick youth, jilted by Infelice has taken to falling in love.<sup>6</sup> He told Kenny that whereas formerly he thought women silly, unamusing toys, & people with whose society he delighted to dispense—he was now only happy where they were & given up to the admiration of their interesting foibles & amiable weaknesses. He is the humble servant of all marriageable young ladies. Oh! Polly! Wordsworth was in town not long ago, publishing & looking old— Coleridge is well, having been ill— Procter<sup>7</sup> is ill—& fond of money, as they say—poetical fact! I heard little else—except that the reign of Cant in England is growing wider & stronger each day— John Bull (the Newsp[aper]) attacked the licencer of the theatres for allowing a piece to pass with improper expressions, so the next farce was sent back to the theatre with a note from the Licencer to say that in the farce there were 9 damns—& two equivocal words which considering what John Bull said, he could not permit to pass.—John Bull is conducted by Hooke,<sup>8</sup> a man I know nothing of but whom H[orace] S[mith] & Kenny joined in abusing as the publisher & speaker of greater blasphemies, indecencies &c than any person in the world. My utter surprize is, why they have not pounced upon Valperga.—

Well!—they all seemed in a fright at the idea of my being under the same roof as Mrs. G[odwin] they made me promise (readily enough) not to stay more than a few days—"a few days in the Strand, & a few weeks only in England," Mrs. K. said, "you will be miserable there." My father, it seems, is in excellent health, & generally in good spirits—but she—well—pazienza!—

<sup>6</sup> On May 1, 1808, William Hazlitt married Sarah Stoddart. Not agreeing, they lived apart after 1819 and were divorced in Scotland on July 17, 1822. At the time of the divorce Hazlitt was madly in love with Sarah Walker, whom Procter called a hussy. She jilted him. Hazlitt published his letters to and about her (whom he names Infelice) in *Liber Amoris; Or, The New Pygmalion*, 1823. On page 10 we read: "H[azlitt]. Thy beauty kills me daily, and I shall think of nothing but thy charms, till the last word trembles on my tongue, and that will be thy name, my love—the name of my Infelice! You will live by that name, you rogue, fifty years after you are dead. Don't you thank me for that?"

"S[arah]. I have no such ambition, Sir." Hazlitt married again (c. April, 1824) a Mrs. Isabella Bridgwater, widow of Lieutenant-Colonel Bridgwater.

<sup>7</sup> Bryan Waller Procter.

<sup>8</sup> Theodore Hook. *John Bull* (December 17, 1820–July 16, 1892) was a vigorous Tory journal hostile to Shelley. See White, *The Unextinguished Hearth*, 385.

Kenny did not give a favourable account of William<sup>9</sup> either—vedremo. The Kenny's are to pay me a visit tomorrow when I may hear more.

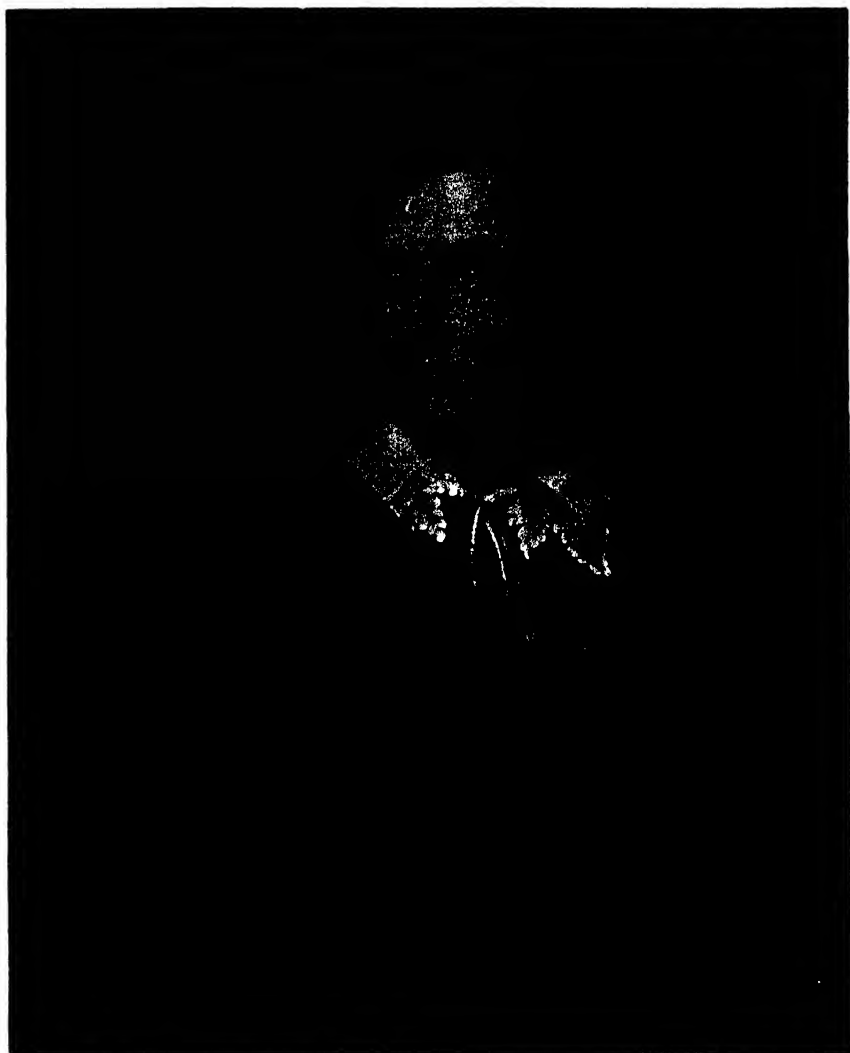
I was pleased to see H[orace] S[mith] looking happy & amiable (synonimes, Hunt?) I do not know what to make of her—the only thing that pleased me was a certain activity of spirit she seemed to have, one likes *motion* & life. Do you know that S[mith] gets £200 per ann[um] from Colburn clear, regularly, for writing “al suo aggio”—some times yes, at times no—for the New Monthly— Would not such be a comfortable addition? if it were not too great an addition to Head work—they want amusing & light writing so much, that they are ready to pay anything for it Speak the word & I will try to manage it for you.<sup>10</sup> It w[oul]d be better than writing notes for the Italian selection—or that might be done in a more lucrative way.—Shall I offer Colburn by the bye, that selection. Going to the fountain head of the knowledge I found that it was not true that the ladies were frightened at the first appearance of Frankenstein— K[enny] says that the first appearance of the monster from F.'s labratory down a dark staircase had a fine effect—but the piece fell off afterwards—though it is having a run.—

I have just made my bargain for Calais & go Wednesday noon—(this is Monday) I shall arrive next sunday & hope to sail the day after— I am under a little anxiety about my finances—but trust that I have *just* enough to conclude my journey. I am obliged to travel rather more expensively than I otherwise should—because my health will not permit me to travel at night—I am so very weak, that the slightest exertion almost upsets me, & an emotion throws me into a fever—there was m[usic] at Kenny's—and all at once I heard chords on the harp—the co[mmence]ment of the Indian air you have often heard me mention that Jane used to sing together [*sic*]—One is so afraid of appearing affected, but I was obliged to entreat them to cease—and then smothered my tears & pain, for it darted like a spasm through me—in my corner.— It was the *only* air except one other of E[ward?]'s in the world, I think, that I c[oul]d not have heard through without exposing myself—but how could I hear the *mimickry* of that voice—the witch to recal[l] such scenes.—Let me forget it—the very remembrance makes me melancholy. Well then, *quatrini*; I trust that I have sufficient—and *enough is as good as a feast*, they say—so I shall be economical, without being anxious, for there is no use in that. I will write my last *un-English* letter to you from Calais.

My dearest Hunt, your letters are a great consolation to me. I feel remorse at the idea of your making your temples beat & your head ache to please me—but how can I forego your kindness? And when I get to England what else but those and the hope of returning to Italy, can keep up my spirits?—and when I see Italy receding & hope fail, what but your letters, my best friend,—

<sup>9</sup> Godwin's son by his second wife.

<sup>10</sup> Whether Mary spoke to Colburn on Hunt's behalf does not appear; but on September 1, 1824, Hunt wrote Bessy Kent, “I have had a fourth offer from Colburn to write for the *New Monthly Magazine*.”—*The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*. I, 232.



JOHN HOWARD PAYNE AS HAMLET  
*from the painting by C. R. Leslie*

*Courtesy of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*



have I left in the world?— You are the tie of the past, the assurance of the future—my Pardoner & teacher— Well I will not be too sentimental—though affection may excuse my feeling, & bodily weakness & solitude the expression.—Goodnight I will finish my letter tomorrow.

(August 19th) The Kenny's have been with me again today and I cannot refrain from telling you what they told me of Hazlitt.<sup>11</sup> Just before the S[cotch] divorce he met Mrs. H[azlitt] in the St. "Ah you here—& how do you do?"—"Oh very well W<sup>m</sup> & how are you?"—"Very well thank you. I was just looking about for my dinner"— "Well mine is just ready a nice boiled leg of pork—if you like W<sup>m</sup> to have a slice"—so he went & had a slice— Miss Lamb in vain endeavoured to make her look on her journey to Scot[la]nd in any other light than a jaunt. K[enny] met H[azlitt] in the Ham<sup>st</sup> fields— Well sir—he said— I was just going to Mr. ——— there's a young lady there—I don't know— But said K. there was another a young lady of colour you were about to marry—has she jilted you like Infelice"— "No, sir, but you see sir, she had relations—kind of people who ask after character, & as mine [is] [? small], sir, why it was broken off."—K. says that when he met you it was at Lambs after a damnation of his case—when all his wish was that people w[oul]d not be sympathizing—& that you seemed to understand this feeling so well, & ate your supper with such appetite, & forced the conversation into the most opposite channels that he was quite delighted "Yes" said Mrs. K. "I loved Mr. Hunt from that moment"— They both desire to know more of you, & as they talk of Italy next year, who knows? K. is passionately fond of music—Mozart, & Louisa plays uncommonly well. I am more pleased with her the more I see of her. She & K. will probably come to Paris tomorrow to take leave of me & perhaps accompany me a few miles out of town—I worked myself into good spirits this evening & it w[oul]d have been pleasant but for 2 young ladies<sup>12</sup> whom Mrs. K. has under their care— They are romantic (ugly [mind you]) & talk about happiness—ridicule the narrow prejudices of K. & L. who say that it consists in cheerfully fulfilling your duties and making those happy around you— "No," they say "there will be no happiness in the world till every thing is capable of demonstration"— Do you understand this? they seek their demonstration in balls theatres finery & their notions of romance, & treating ill a poor indulgent father, who is looked upon as the most prejudiced of beings— Miss L[amb] it seems has attacks of a much lighter nature than formerly—she is never violent, & is never removed from home—she has a person to attend her there—she was ill for 3 months when in France in Mrs. K.'s house.—

One more letter from Calais & then "to England if you will"— Dear children when shall your exile Grandmother see you again—they say that my

<sup>11</sup> See note 6.

<sup>12</sup> Sisters named Bryant. See Stanley T. Williams (ed.), *Journal of Washington Irving, 1823–1824* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1931), 31.

father is anxious to see me—I dread that tie—all the rest is air Adieu dearest Polly; my good chicks, I hope you are all good T[hornton] J[ohnny] M[ary] S[winburne] P[ercy] H[enry] S[ylván] & V[incent] a blessing on you all—My dear Hunt adieu believe me

faithfully yours

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] Mrs. K. says that I am grown very like my mother, especially in manner—in my way of addressing people—this is the most flattering thing any one c[oul]d say to me— I have tried to please them, & I have some hopes that I have succeeded.—

H. S[mith] tells me that S[ir] T. S[helley] is laid on the shelf and Whitton & Lady S[helley] manage everything— L[ord] B[yron] wanted me to write to her—I did not for one hates to *beg*—should I—or not? [Te]ll me you, good one.<sup>18</sup>

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Toscana/ Florence—  
l'Italic. POSTMARK: 2/ SETTEMBRE. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2752); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 238–40 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 971–73 (first half only); *Letters*, 112–23. TEXT: From original letter.

## 194. *To Leigh Hunt*

[14 Speldhurst Street, Brunswick Square]  
September 9th [1823]

My dear Hunt,

Bessy promised me to relieve you from any inquietude you might suffer from not hearing from me, so I indulged myself with not writing to you until I was quietly settled in lodgings of my own. Want of time is not my excuse, I had plenty—but until I saw all quiet around me I had not the spirit to write a line— I thought of you all—how much! and often longed to write, yet would not till I called myself free. To turn southward; to imagine you all, to put myself in the midst of you would have destroyed all my philosophy. But now I do so. I am in little neat lodgings—my boy in bed, I quiet—and I will now talk to you; tell you what I have seen and heard, and with as little re-pining as I can try, by making the best of what I have, the certainty of your friendship and kindness, to rest half content tho' I am not in the "Paradise of Exiles."—Well—first I will tell you journalwise the history of my 16 days in London. I arrived Monday the 25th of August— My father and William came for me to the Wharf. I had an excellent passage of 11½ hours—a glassy sea and a contrary wind—the smoke of our fire was wafted right aft and streamed out behind us—but wind was of little consequence—the tide was with us—and though the engine gave a "short uneasy motion" to the vessel, the water was so smooth that no one on board was sick and Persino played about the deck in high glee. I had a very kind reception in the Strand<sup>1</sup> and

<sup>18</sup> Mary did write to Lady Shelley. See Letter 194, note 6.

<sup>1</sup> That is, at Godwin's house.

all was done that could be done to make me comfortable— I exerted myself to keep up my spirits—the house though rather dismal, is infinitely better than the Skinner St. one— I resolved not to think of certain things, to take all as a matter of course and thus contrived to keep myself out of the gulph of melancholy, on the edge of which I was and am continually peeping.

But lo and behold! I found myself famous!—Frankenstein<sup>2</sup> had prodigious success as a drama and was about to be repeated for the 23rd night at the English Opera House. The play bill amused me extremely, for in the list of dramatis personae came, ——by Mr. T. Cooke: this nameless mode of naming the unnameable is rather good. On Friday Aug. 29th Jane my father William and I went to the theatre to see it. Wallack looked very well as F[ranken]stein—he is at the beginning full of hope and expectation—at the end of the 1st Act. The stage represents a room with a staircase leading to F.'s workshop—he goes to it and you see his light at a small window, through which a frightened servant peeps, who runs off in terror when F. exclaims "It lives"!—Presently F. himself rushes in horror and trepidation from the room and while still expressing his agony and terror—— throws down the door of the laboratory, leaps the staircase and presents his unearthly and monstrous person on the stage. The story is not well managed—but Cooke played ——'s part extremely well—his seeking as it were for support—his trying to grasp at the sounds he heard—all indeed he does was well imagined and executed. I was much amused, and it appeared to excite a breathless eagerness in the audience—it was a third piece a scanty pit filled at half price—and all stayed till it was over. They continue to play it even now.

On Saturday Aug. 30th I went with Jane to the Gisbornes. I know not why, but seeing them seemed more than anything else to remind me of Italy. Evening came on drearily, the rain splashed on the pavement, nor star, nor moon deigned to appear— I looked upward to seek an image of Italy but the blotted sky told me only of my change. I tried to collect my thoughts, and then again dared not think—for I am a ruin where owls and bats live only and I lost my last *singing bird* when I left Albaro. It was my birthday and it pleased me to tell the people so—to recollect and feel that time flies and what is to arrive is nearer, and my home not so far off as it was a year ago. This same evening on my return to the Strand I saw Lamb who was very entertaining and amiable though a little deaf. One of the first questions he asked me was whether they made puns in Italy— I said—Yes, now Hunt is there— He said that Burney made a pun in Otaheite, the first that was ever made in that country: At first the natives could not make out what he meant, but all

<sup>2</sup> Mary's novel (1818) was dramatized as a melodrama by Richard Brinsley Peake with the title "Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein." It was first acted at the English Opera House (Lyceum) on Monday, July 28, 1823. Nicoll says: "In 1823, versions appeared at the English Opera House, Royalty and Coburg. Milner's rendering (Cob. 1823) and Brough's burlesque (Adel. 1849) testify to its enduring popularity."—Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama* (Cambridge, The University Press, 1930, 2 vols.), I, 96n.



at once they discovered the *pun* and danced round him in transports of joy. L[amb] said one thing which I am sure will give you pleasure. He corrected for Hazlitt a new collection of *Elegant Extracts*, in which the Living Poets are included.<sup>3</sup> He said he was much pleased with many of your things, with a little of Montgomery and a little of Crabbe—Scott he found tiresome—Byron had many fine things but was tiresome but yours appeared to him the freshest and best of all. These *Extracts* have never been published—they have been offered to Mr. Hunter and seeing the book at his house I had the curiosity to look at what the extracts were that pleased L[amb]. There was the *Canto* of the *Fatal Passion* from Rimini several things from *Foliage* and from the *Amyntas*.<sup>4</sup> L[amb] mentioned also your conversation with Coleridge and was much pleased with it. He was very gracious to me, and invited me to see him when Miss L[amb] should be well.

On the strength of the drama my father had published *for my benefit* a new edition of F[rankenstein]<sup>5</sup> and this seemed all I had to look to, for he despaired utterly of my doing anything with S[ir] T. S[helley].—I wrote to him however to tell him I had arrived and on the following Wednesday had a note from Whitton where he invited me, if I wished for an explanation of S. T. S.'s intentions concerning my boy to call on him.<sup>6</sup> I went with my father. W[hitton] was very polite though long winded—his great wish seemed to be to prevent my applying again to S. T. S., whom he represented as old, infirm and irritable—however he advanced me £100 for my immediate expenses, told me that he c[oul]d not speak positively until he had seen S. T. S. but that he doubted not but that I should receive the same annually for my child, and with a little time and patience, I should get an allowance for myself. This, you see relieved me from a load of anxieties— I hesitated no

<sup>3</sup> *Select British Poets, or New Elegant Extracts from Chaucer to the Present Time, with Critical Remarks*, by Wm. Hazlitt (London, William C. Hall, 1824). The preface says that this volume is offered as an improvement over the *Elegant Extracts* compiled by the late Dr. Knox. Poems by Byron, Shelley, Keats, Hunt, and other moderns are included. The 1824 issue was suppressed, however, and the book reissued in 1825 without the contemporary poets. There are eight selections from Hunt, including "To T[hornton] L[eigh] H[unt]" on page 733, "The Story of Rimini, Canto III," and the Prologue to "Amyntas."

<sup>4</sup> *The Story of Rimini*, 1816; *Foliage, or Poems Original and Translated*, 1818; *Amyntas, a Tale of the Woods, from the Italian of Torquato Tasso*, 1820.

<sup>5</sup> *Frankenstein; or The Modern Prometheus*, by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley. In two volumes, a new edition (London, printed for G. W. B. Whittaker, Ave Maria Lane, 1823).

<sup>6</sup> Whitton wrote the following unpublished letter (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 973-74):

3 King's Road, September 3, 1823.

Madam,

Sir Timothy Shelley has sent to me your letters to him and to Lady Shelley, and the state of his feelings upon the subject referred to will not allow him to correspond with you thereon.

Sir Timothy has intimated to me that you are acquainted with his general sentiments, and that he does not think proper to vary or alter that determination which he has already stated. When you shall have placed your son in that situation which you may think desirable for him, if you will let me know the particulars I will write to Sir Timothy thereon and inquire what proportion of the expense he will undertake to pay. I shall leave town on Friday for some weeks, but I shall be ready to receive you at any hour before four this day or tomorrow (except at twelve o'clock to-morrow) if you shall desire a personal interview or any further explanation.

Yours, Madam, obediently,  
Wm. Whitton.

longer to quit the Strand and having secured neat cheap lodgings—removed hither last night. Such dear Hunt is the outline of your poor Exile's history. After two days of rain the weather has been *uncommonly fine* cioè without rain, and cloudless I believe, though I trust to other eyes for that fact, since the whitewashed sky is anything but blue to any but the perceptions of the natives themselves. It is so cold however that the fire I am now sitting by is not the first that has been lighted, for my father had one two days ago. The wind is east and piercing—but I comfort myself with the hope that softer gales are now fanning your *not* throbbing temples, that the climate of Florence will prove kindly to you, and that your health and spirits will return to you. Why am I not there? This is quite a foreign country to me; the names of the places sound strangely—the voices of the people are new and grating—the vulgar English they speak particularly displeasing—but for my father I should be with you next spring—but his heart and soul are set on my stay, and in this world it always seems one's duty to sacrifice one's own desires, and that claim ever appears the strongest which claims such a sacrifice.

On Tuesday (Sep. 2nd) I dined with Mr<sup>r</sup> Hunter and Bessy and she afterwards drank tea with me at the Strand— She is certainly much improved in countenance. Her mouth which used always to express violence and anger now seems habitually to wear a good tempered smile— Mrs Godwin herself observed the change—this is certainly to Bessy's credit since she is far from happy as you may guess. It would be useless for me to repeat Bessy's news, since doubtless she has told you all herself and you already know that the Novello's have, from motives of economy, retired to the country.<sup>7</sup> One thing at Mr. Hunter's amused me very much—your piping faun and kneeling Venus are on the piano, but, from a feeling of delicacy they are turned with their backs to the company. I think of going down to Richmond on Friday and take a last peep at green fields [and (*MS torn*)] leaves before I return to my winter cage. You must know that Jane is a great favourite [with] Mrs. H.—Poor thing she is much persecuted by Edward's Mother-in-Law who to save her own credit spreads false reports about her as much as she can. She even called on Mrs. Godwin to warn her that I ought not to know her—at the same time that she tells other people that she can never forgive *her*, for knowing *me*. England is no place for Jane. How I wish we could leave it together next spring. Hogg and Peacock are both out of town.

<sup>7</sup> To Shacklewell Green. Vincent Novello (1781–1861) was one of the most celebrated musicians of his time. He was chiefly an organist, but also a composer, arranger, and founder of the famous music publishing house that still bears his name. His chief contributions of value were mainly in arranging and publishing music. His father was Italian, his mother English. On August 17, 1808, he married Mary Sabilla Hehl. They had eleven children, ten of them being: Mary Victoria (eldest daughter, married Charles Cowden Clarke), Clara Anastasia (b. 1818), Mary Sabilla, Joseph Alfred (eldest son), Edward, Cecilia, Emma, Florence, Charles Arthur, and Sydney. (See Letter 243.) Mary had met Novello in 1818, but the acquaintance did not then ripen into friendship. Her journal for Sunday, March 8, 1818, records: "We dine at Hunt's and meet Mr. Novello. Music."—Dowden, II, 184. After her return to England in 1823 she was, upon Hunt's recommendation, warmly received by the Novellos and was soon on intimate terms with them.

I have now renewed my acquaintance with the friend of my girlish days<sup>8</sup>—she has been ill a long time, even disturbed in her reason, and the remains of this still hang over her. She is delighted to see me, although she is just now on the point of going to Scotland for a few weeks. The great affection she displays for me endears her to me and the memory of early days—else all is so changed for me that I should hardly feel pleasure in cultivating her society. We never do what we wish when we wish it, and when we desire a thing earnestly, and it does arrive, that or we are changed, so that we slide from the summit of our wishes and find ourselves where we were. Two years ago I looked forward with eagerness to your arrival, and pictured to myself all that I should enjoy with you and dear Marianne to make a part of our pleasures—you came, 12 dreary months past, I just began to regain your affection and to delight in your society and I am here, to pine for it again. This is life!—And what more have I to do with its painful bitterness—sour sweets and sweet.

Your brother has been out of town all this time. I heard that he was to return yesterday and expect him to call on me today. Of course I did not talk to Henry of all that I have to say to his father. Henry is *not* handsome. He is stiff in his manners though polite to me. They seem to be going on well and he says that the literary Examiner is succeeding. The truth, however is, dear Hunt, that there is nothing in it except the *Indicator* which is worth reading—but you will see them and judge. They have offered that I should contribute to fill up the few pages that follow the criticism on books (which is written by a Mr. Gordon, I think is his name) and when I can I will—but I have not that talent which enlivens a half page— Do you know that your friend Rd. Mr. Collyer (who so shamefully attacked dearest S.<sup>9</sup>) has been accused of the *Bishops* crime and has absconded— This will become quite a clerical amusement, its unnaturalness befits their habitual hypocrisy and cant— When a man belies his conscience to the world he will soon bely it to himself and what comes next, may easily be as bad as poor [? John]. Adieu, dear friend I will finish the rest when I have seen your brother.

(Sept. 11th). I saw your brother yesterday. Being the first time that I saw him you may guess that I looked curiously at him. In features he is very like Henry, but softened from his immoveability of feature by time and suffering. He does not look so old as he is, and L[ord] B[yron] w[oul]d envy his unchanged looks, but I do not think him at all like your picture. He was all

<sup>8</sup> Isabel Baxter. See Letter 4, note 1, and Letter 32, note 3.

<sup>9</sup> Reverend William Bengo Collyer, "Licentious Productions in High Life," *The Investigator, or Quarterly Magazine*, second part (5:315–73). In this review of *Queen Mab* the author indulged in horrible personal abuse. This sentence probably hurt Shelley most: "These too, with the principles of which they were the natural offspring, most righteously deprived him of the guardianship of his children, but unhappily drove their mother to ruin, prostitution, and suicide, whilst he consoled himself for the loss of a wife's society by first seducing one daughter of his friend, and afterwards living in an incestuous connection with another." William Hazlitt (White says Leigh Hunt) attacked Collyer in the *Examiner* for December 22, 1822, under the heading "Canting Slander, to the Reverend William Bengo Collyer." Collyer was later charged by his congregation with moral degeneracy. See White, *The Unextinguished Hearth*, 98–104.

politeness and even kindness to me— I soon found that I had two feelings to remove in his mind—one your not having managed well with the D. in M Stores—the other poor dear M[arianne]’s *extravagance*— I believe that I succeeded in both these points at least he said that I did. He spoke with great affection of you and when he went away said, that he was reserved and had the character perhaps of being more so than he was but that he did not wish to be so with you or with me— In fact though *obstinacy* is written on his brow, and reserve in all his solemn address yet he encouraged me so far that I look forward with less apprehension to the final result of my next conversation with him. I feel that *I* must not be reserved, nor shall I be so— I told him as it was that he ought to write oftener, spoke of regular remittances—and urged him to send an *immediate* one; he said that he would write by the same post as that by which this letter will go, and that I trust will contain a permission for you to draw. I expect to see him soon again. *Direct to me 14 Speldhurst St.—Brunswick Square.*

I will write again speedily—and wait anxiously to hear from you—Keep well—be all well, dear, dearest friend, be as happy as you can and while it be of value to you, and even after, depend upon the unremitting affection of your Exile.

Mary W. S.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—Italy. POST-MARK: 27 SETTEMBRE. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: (All incomplete) *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 123–28; *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 976–81 (prints as two letters); Marshall, II, 94–97; *Letters*, 123–29. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

### 195. *To Leigh Hunt\**

14 Speldhurst St., Brunswick Sq.  
September 18th [1823]

My dear Hunt

There is a tone of melancholy about your letter which I received last night, dated Florence, which makes me melancholy also. God knows I do not wonder at it, care and ill health press upon you, and the sorrows of this strange life have collected themselves into a mighty host to oppress you. But I have not the same despair about you now that you have left the *non Cristiano* Albaro, and have established yourselves in Florence. You will see I doubt not some old friends there, for somehow or other people pop up in that city whom you imagined hundreds of miles off—you will make new ones too; you will find objects on all sides to amuse and distract you, and that is what you most especially want, for else the very sociability of your disposition preys upon you, and you become at times the most unsocial of men to those near you, because the quicker impulses of your nature stagnate—as they say warm water freezes quicker than cold. You must do your very best to rouse yourself, and I have no doubt you will do your *very* best,—for being patient and very, both these qualities will assist you to bear and in time to be cheerful.

I hope by this time also you have heard from your brother, and that he has relieved you from some anxieties. I have not seen him since I last wrote; I have been expecting him to call on me every day but he has not—so I shall call on him and learn what I can from him. I own the easiest way of managing the affair seems to me, that, economizing as much as you can, you ought to draw on him when necessary and write to inform him of your bill. This would save you and Marianne much anxiety and in fact be the same thing to him; for you must live, and you would not draw for more than is perfectly necessary. It would simplify the affair, and in the end he would have nothing to complain of, and would feel that.

I spoke to your brother when I saw him concerning the publication of such MS. as I had of our S[helley] and he agreed to it. Since that Procter called on my father to say that two gentlemen—great admirers of S[helley]—were willing to undertake the risk of such a publication if I would agree to it.<sup>1</sup> The risk, I hope is none—I agreed mentioning that I had spoken to J. H[unt]. Procter saw the latter immediately and then called upon me, shewing a zeal in the affair, which considering that he is an author, and a poet pleased me mightily. I am now therefore fully occupied in preparing the MS. Procter asked me if I would write a biographical notice.—This, just at this moment would I think better come from you.<sup>2</sup> I know you have prepared an article. This you might alter and enlarge, and without making a regular biography—write what *we* (you and I) would wish to be written. I should afterwards publish a complete edition of S.'s work—but the present volume would consist of unpublished pieces. (This latter circumstance is not yet settled—perhaps they will all be printed together). You have I think my copies of the *Essay on Devils*—*Translation of Cyprian*—*Witch of Atlas* and the *Cyclops of Euripides*—The *Cyprian* I could easily transcribe again. The *Witch of Atlas* I have a copy of corrected by S[helley]—and those vacancies filled up which are in my copy. But I wish that you w[oul]d send me immediately the *Essay*

<sup>1</sup> The expense of the publication of Shelley's *Posthumous Poems* was voluntarily guaranteed by Bryan Waller Procter, Thomas Lovell Beddoes, and Thomas Forbes Kelsall. (The volume paid for itself.) The volume appeared shortly after June 1, 1824, the date of the preface. Mary also planned to publish the posthumous prose works, but this was abandoned when Sir Timothy Shelley objected so strenuously to the *Posthumous Poems* that the publication had to be suppressed. (See Letter 216.) The remaining 191 of the original 500 copies, together with the original MSS and copies of the intended volume of prose, were placed in Peacock's hands for safekeeping and as a guarantee that no further publication would take place during Sir Timothy's lifetime. Mary could not do otherwise than consent to these arrangements (effected in August, 1824), for her small income from Sir Timothy would otherwise have been cut off. See Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 576–85, for details and documents.

In his *Memoir of Beddoes* (*Poems Posthumous and Collected of T. L. Beddoes*, 1851, I, xxiii–xxiv) Thomas Forbes Kelsall wrote: "With those who partake his [Beddoes'] admiration of Shelley, it will be no unpleasing memento of Beddoes to learn that, finding the risk of expense to be a bar to the immediate publication of the posthumous poems he offered, in conjunction with two other of the deceased poet's admirers, to incur the hazard: and the posthuma . . . was published. [Footnote:] The whole impression (excepting a few copies that had been distributed or sold) was almost immediately withdrawn by Mrs. Shelley, as part of an arrangement with Sir Timothy Shelley: but the object of Beddoes and his associates was not the less attained in the security and partial circulation of the poems."

<sup>2</sup> For the history of Hunt's biographical essay on Shelley, see Letter 225, note 1.

on Devils and the Cyclops—particularly the latter—for there were a few lines filled up—besides I should wish to see your correction of it and compare it with the original.

Procter pleased me by his errand and also by his manner and appearance. He is evidently vain, yet not pretending, and his ill health is for me an interesting circumstance; since I have been so accustomed to Poets whose frame has been shattered by the mind, that a stout healthy person would rather seem to me a waggoner than a versifier. Yet after all, except the dramatic scenes I do not like Procter's style—and, worst of all, have not read much that he has written—so that when he alluded to some part of one of his poems, I am afraid I looked the ignorance I felt—I trust however this unhappy passage was in the Flood of Thessaly, which considering absence and travelling and arrivals I may be pardoned for not having *yet* read— I shall set about the task immediately, for he deserves that at least for the attention he has shewn in this affair—and though one need not praise an Author to his face—one must have read him. He said one or two things of L[ord] B[yron] which made me smile, knowing what is behind the curtain as well as I do— He said that he hoped he would not *fight* for the Greeks— I told him that he might be at ease on that point, *Helmets so fine were never made to hack*—the existence of these helmets by the bye is well known here, as there was a paragraph in the Chronicle describing them<sup>3</sup>— Most people think it a calumny L. B. may be happy in the certainty that he cannot be calumniated. There is a small knife for you, dear Polly—so—don't be severe, Marianne. Every one talks of the large sums he is to give. I wonder what Mavrocordato will say to them a few months hence.

I am going tomorrow to Richmond to see Tom<sup>4</sup> perform and to have a sight of the green leaves before their faded forms strew the ground. I am comfortable here as far as I can be in England—and worse than that—in London. My lodgings are neat and quiet—my servant good—my boy in delightful health and very happy and amiable. My time occupied and my thoughts also with how many thoughts of the past. But the future— My father intends to make my returning to Italy an affair of life and death with him, and makes my society appear so necessary to him, that I hardly know what to think or say— Pazienza! At present I will not look beyond the present hour— I am here—so I am—where I shall be—Shall will know—and my motto being *Alla Giornata*—I shut my eyes and will not care.

There is one question I must not forget to ask you—if you write the biographical notice would it be in keeping to dedicate the book to you—and if not, do you think Trelawny would be pleased by a compliment he so richly deserves.

I have just seen your brother, and I find to my great disappointment that he has not yet written to you, having waited to hear from you. There is only

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 190, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> Tom Kent, Marianne Hunt's brother, an actor at that time. See Letter 209, note 6.

one good thing that I have heard, which is that so far from appreciating your delicacy in waiting for his permission to draw, he was perfectly unaware of this circumstance— I therefore reiterate what I said before that you had better draw when you must draw, only informing him that you have done so— With regard to settled remittances his statement of facts is such, that at present it hardly appears possible to settle any thing—since all is at present on a kind of shifting ground one cannot well understand. I mentioned to him the papers concerning the property of the Examiner<sup>5</sup>— He said that for 2 years you [had] done nothing for it, and he had been constantly employed giving his time and in[curring ?] danger. But he declined being a judge in his own cause and said that he wished that you should put it into the hands of two of your friends, who should decide upon what writings ought to be drawn up and he would abide by their decision. He mentioned Mr. Novello and Mr. Procter as friends of yours who understood business. Your brother must be aware that your talents established the Examiner, and that its great falling off is in consequence of your desertion of it. But he says that it is getting up again now. I find that you have not mentioned to him that you want to draw—but I am sure that you will by the time that you receive this letter, so pray do—though drawing in this way it were best perhaps to draw for smaller sums at a time. Your brother repeats that you shall not be in difficulties from the moment that he can have any power to relieve you from them, and declares that he has nothing so much at heart as to relieve your mind from pecuniary anxieties. He says that for a long time, upon lowering the price of the Examiner, they received nothing from it and were even obliged to delay the usual instalments—but it is now rising— The Literary Examiner hardly as yet pays its way. I wish they got better writers for it—else I am convinced the Indicator is the sole cause of its sale.

What do I not wish concerning you, my dear, dear friends—but I do not see clearly what it is best to do— If your health permitted it, how excellent it would be to get some thing from another quarter besides your brother. In the mean time I would have you seriously think of this proposition of drawing up writings concerning the Examiner, for it is slipping through your hands—and if help from you is the thing to keep up your share in it, I would not barter that for any share in the Literary Examiner.

You talk of heat—I am over a fire—but heat ought not to hurt you, or Italy must loose half its good for you. It never hurt either of us, and your West Indian blood<sup>6</sup> ought to protect you in some degree. Take care of yourself, dear

<sup>5</sup> The prolonged dispute between Leigh and John Hunt over their respective shares in the *Examiner* was at least temporarily settled in December, on the fifteenth of which month Vincent Novello wrote: "John says he is willing to secure you an Annuity of One Hundred Pounds from *The Examiner* as long as it continues in existence under his controul. . . . He will also pay a certain sum for whatever articles you may in future contribute towards it."—Blunden, *Leigh Hunt*, 204–205. See also Letters 202 and 203.

<sup>6</sup> Hunt's grandfather and father were both named Isaac and both lived in Barbados for many years.

Hunt—for this bad world cannot spare such as you— Why do cares so press upon you—alas, alas, why is all that is—and what was the power that snapt our chain last year?—

(10 o'clock P.M.) I now conclude my letter, dear Hunt, and I wish I knew what words with which to conclude that might bring a smile to your lips or a happy thought to your mind. How truly you deserve to pass your days in ease, yet day after day goes on and no ease visits you. Yet try to be happy, try to bear life lightly—and I hope you will find some in Florence to render this task more easy— I am far away—my letters written in one mood may find you in another. All might go well if your health were good—in the first place therefore take care of that— Dear Very Patient and Dear Patient Very, my heart enters into all the feelings of yours and sinks with them—but if you both get well a better sun may shine. Adieu, my best friends, confide in the affectionate attachment of your exiled grandmother

Mary W. S.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—L'Italie.  
ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 196. *To Leigh Hunt*

[London] October 2nd [1823]

My dear Hunt

I spent a few days about a fortnight ago, at Richmond, in the midst of the *Hunters*. I wished if possible to see Tom in some character by which I might send M[arianne] my notion of her brother's performance. But that was impossible. The Manager and his lady of the R. theatre (a gentle couple both nearly 60 years of age—and as fat & wrinkled as need be) are so fond of playing the characters of young lovers in high comedy that poor Tom gets quite in despair. Mrs. H.<sup>1</sup> is not only reconciled to the stage but *buys* & makes all his dresses herself, and except now and then a quarrel about the fashion of a jacket Tom's word is law in the house. I was excessively amused by the conversation at dinner the first day I was there, Nancy present. We spoke of Henry H[unt]<sup>2</sup> & Mrs. H. said that she did not like him that he was so conceited & pragmatistical and that nothing wd. do him so much good as getting into some exceeding scrape. "Yes," said Tom, "His father ought to treat him as Dowton treated his son—finding his pretensions to morality very inconvenient he went to the best looking ladies at the saloon at the theatre entreating them to seduce his son, & promising them any reward if they should succeed."—"Excellent!" cried Mrs. H. "I only wish these same ladies would get hold of Henry, they wd. do him a world of good"— What think you of this Polly?

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Rowland Hunter, mother of Tom and Bessy Kent and Mrs. Leigh Hunt.

<sup>2</sup> Son of John Hunt.



Last Thursday I dined at Mr. Novello's with—ah! Hunt!—the Emerald Pin and her Cara Sposo.<sup>3</sup> She made me a speech on seeing me, which for the life of me I could not answer, for her voice was so exactly like your mimicry of it, that I was quite aghast. They all joined chorus in lamenting your absence and the E.P. became quite eloquent on the topic. They seemed to be going on as of old. Mr. A[rthur] G[liddon] had dared Novello to make<sup>†</sup> his wife have a *boiled* goose for dinner. At the dinner hour both Novello & the goose were absent— Mr. G. was triumphant and E. P. loud in her applause of Mrs. N[ovello]'s resistance to the matrimonial yoke. Presently Mr. N[ovello] came in & his lady ordered *his* dinner to be brought in—the covered dish, uncovered, discovered the boiled goose in all its *non* glory— Anastasia seemed a little confounded— Mr. G. put on his spectacles, at first declared it only *pale* roasted, but then convinced both he & Mr. N[ovello] ate heartily of the boiled goose to the scandal of Mr. C. C. Clarke and Mr. [Edward] Holmes who as batchelors wd. by no means patronize the spoiling of the goose. We had music in the evening—Beethoven Hayden. Mozart—The March in Alceste & the March in the [*words illegible*]<sup>†</sup>—but no singing—on Saturday (the day after tomorrow) Jane & I are to go and Mrs. B. Hunt is to be there. But a word of Schacklewell and their new House both odious— The G[liddon]s are in despair at the removal for they are in King St. again. The house is a huddled nest of 16 rooms—low & small— They have a dismal garden & a damp arbour where they made us moralize—for they are themselves as *yet* perfectly content— Dio faccia che [*? requitono*] cosi— Do not mention my disapprobation, for one must not put them out of conceit of a place they have taken for 12 years—& on which for *economy's sake* they have laid out a great deal of money.

You must know that Southey has attacked *Elia's* religion in the Quarterly & whined over the fate of T[hornton] L[eigh] H[unt] (my favourite child) for not having better religious principles instilled into him. This roused Lamb & on the spur of the moment he has written a reply which has appeared in the London Magazine.<sup>4</sup> With regard to religion he turns the tables on Southey, and tells him that no one can tell what religion he is of—tell[s] him that any spirit of joking that he (Lamb) may have on that subject he imbibed from Southey himself—telling him that he had all his life made a jest of the devil—saying: “You have made wonderfully free with, and been mightily pleasant upon, the popular idea & attributes of him. A noble Lord, your brother Vision-

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Gliddon and his wife Alistatia, close friends of the Novellos and the Hunts.

<sup>4</sup> Southey's article entitled “The Progress of Infidelity” was published in the January number of the *Quarterly Review*, which seems not to have appeared until July. In it he mentions the *Elia* Essays and Thornton Hunt only incidentally: “*Elia's* Essays, a book which wants only a sounder religious feeling, to be as delightful as it is original.” Lamb replied at length and with much feeling in a “Letter to Southey,” published in the *London Magazine* for October. Lamb enumerates his many friends and defends Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt particularly. On November 19 Southey wrote Lamb, disclaiming any intention to injure him and hoping they might meet the next week and be reconciled. Lamb replied, all contrition, and the quarrel was over. (Lucas, *The Life of Charles Lamb*, 508–13.)

ary, has scarcely taken greater liberties with the material keys and mere Catholic notion of St. Peter. You have flattered him in prose, you have chanted him in goodly odes. You have been his Jester; Volunteer Laureat, & self-elected Court Poet of Beelzebub"—What after this will become of the Satanic school?—Southey has spoken ill of L[amb]'s friends—he calls them over, mentioning their various good qualities briefly & then more fully enters upon your character & his intimacy with Hazlitt. He says: "Accident introduced me to the acquaintance of Mr. L[eigh] H[unt]—& the experience of his many friendly qualities confirmed a friendship between us. You, who have been misrepresented yourself, I should hope, have not lent an idle ear to the calumnies which have been spread abroad concerning this gentleman. I was admitted to his household for several years, & do most solemnly aver, that I believe him to be in his domestic relations as correct as any man."—He then alludes to Rimini, disapproving of the subject, but saying that "it has nothing in common with the black horrors sung by Ford and Massinger."—& says that he looks upon the author of Rimini "As a man of taste and a poet. He is better than so, he is one of the most cordial-minded men I ever knew, a matchless fire-side companion. I mean not to affront or wound your feelings when I say that, in his more genial moods, he has often reminded me of you. There is the same air of mild dogmatism—the same condescending to boyish sportiveness—in both your conversations. His hand writing is so much the same with your own, that I have opened more than one letter of his, hoping, nay, not doubting, but that it was from you, & have been disappointed (he will bear with me for saying so) at the discovery of my error."—He alludes to your opinions concerning marriage, which he says are opposite to his own—but he says neither for these opinions "nor for his political asperities & petulancies, which are wearing out with the heats & vanities of youth, did I select him for a friend; but for qualities which fitted him for that relation. I do not know whether I flatter myself with being the occasion, but certain it is, that, touched with some misgivings for sundry harsh things which he had written aforetime against our friend C[oleridge], before he left this country he sought a reconciliation with that gentleman (himself being his own introducer), & found it. —L[eigh] H[unt] is now in Italy; on his departure to wh. land, with much regret I took my leave of him and his little family—7 of them, Sir, with their mother—as kind a set of little people (T[hornton] H[unt] & all) as affectionate children, as ever blessed a parent. Had you seen them, Sir, I think you wd. not have looked upon them as so many little Jonases—but rather as pledges of the vessel's safety, that was to bear such a freight of love.—I wish you wd. read Mr. H[unt]'s lines to that same T[hornton] H[unt] '6 years old during a sickness'; 'Sleep breathes at last from out thee, my little patient boy—(they are to be found in the 47th page of Foliage) & ask yourself how far they are out of the spirit of Christianity. I have a letter from Italy, received but the other day into wh. L[eigh] H[unt] has put as much heart, & as many friendly

yearnings after old associates, & native country, as, I think, paper can well held. It wd. do you no hurt to give that the perusal also.”—

He then turns to Hazlitt—but it is too long to quote—he regrets his instability—but speaks of him with infinite kindness—

I copy all this, dear Hunt, because I am sure it will give you pleasure to find how your friends in England remember you. And you are comfortless I fear there where I wd. fain be, in dear Florence. I *do* dislike this place—yet here I am with little hope of being quickly elsewhere. I was glad to find that you had found an old acquaintance<sup>5</sup> at Florence & shall be happy to see her (could you entrust her with my watch—but do not write to me by her—or by any one, except the post—I have a particular dislike to letters by a private hand—if they have any thing in them worth reading). What a divine place Italy is! It seems to nurture all gentle feelings & to warm with peculiar sensibility an affectionate heart; its winds whisper a thousand expressions of kindness—clouds vanish from the mind as from the sky. Here!—methinks a cold rain falls on the feelings & quenches the living spark that was lighted there—it is a dreary, rainy cold *infelicissimo paese*. When oh when, when shall I escape?—I walked the other day with William [Godwin, Jr.] to the fields about Kentish Town, old friends I doubt not of yours. The day was fine—those fields are particularly beautiful shaded by majestic elms & looking towards the woody uplands of Highgate. Next summer I shall get out to some place like this, & enjoy the best part of England its fields & trees— Yet I love the mountains of Tuscany, its olive copses & chestnut wood, its dancing steams & vine shaded allies & its transcendant sky better than the green grass here.—So you were disappointed with the Venus di Medici<sup>6</sup>—so was I. She is an artful little thing—so unpretending that you almost think her insignificant, but she creeps upon you—she & all her excellencies until you are quite taken with her grace & softness. You go to the gallery that is well. You see some society—that also is well. You did *not* see the scenery of Valperga—but all Tuscany bears the character of that scenery, though the country around Florence perhaps less than any—it is too much inhabited, too little solitary (N.B. no further notice has been taken of Valperga in the E[xamine]r—another N.B. did you send the copy of that book to Mrs. Mason—if you did not or have one to spare, will you send it across the Apennines to the Guiccioli at Bologna, as I promised her one, & she writes to remind me of the promise— I have asked her also to get a book or two for me, which she will send you—you will pay her—& forward me the books by the first opportunity— Do you know that the duty on my foreign books comes to £14—the whole packages will cost me £20—so beware of purchases to bring home with you).—

Adieu—dear Hunt, my own Polly—& do you, Polly, write; for I learn more of the real state of things in 3 lines from you than 3 pages from H[unt]. God

<sup>5</sup> A Mrs. Payne. See Letter 199.

<sup>6</sup> Hunt's opinion of this famous piece of sculpture is set forth at length in his *Autobiography*, Chapter XXI.

bless you all—dear grandchildren—you see I have a large sheet of paper & will fill it soon—& again declare myself what I now do *en attendant*—

Your affectionate Exile.—

(Sunday Oct. 5th) I passed a very pleasant evening at the Novellos' yesterday— At dinner there was only Jane & the Lambs—the Gliddons did not come. This was the first time Miss Lamb had come out—they (she in particular) seemed very glad to see me and I go to spend the day at her house on Thursday.—In the evening Mr. and Mrs. B. Hunt came & Mr. F. Novello—we had a great deal of music beginning (to please me) with sacred music—introducing Mariannes favorite hymn from the [*MS torn*].—Afterwards we had several duets &c from Figaro. Looking at Mr. F. N's Italian physiognomy & [gestures I (*MS torn*)] almost have fancied myself in Italy. I was somewhat disappointed in Mrs. B. H.'s singing—but [she was] not in voice. The singers went away early & then we had several pieces from Himmel, as you [ ] desired—they were excessively beautiful, & I dare say I shall think them more so when I hear them again. My ears were filled then with Handel & Mozart (by the bye, *do* send me the name of that air of Handels of which you know only a few bars) and yet I was greatly pleased. Nothing can be more amiable than Mr. Novello's manners to me, and I tell you this, because since it chiefly (wholly I may say) arises from your mode of writing to him concerning me you may see with what an active spirit of friendship he is animated towards you.—You know there resides with them C. C. Clarke, who puts one out of all patience with his “charming!” & “beautiful!” as an accompaniment, a little discordant or so, *si guasta unpo la musica, e si guasta unpo le parole, ma pero—* with Handel & Mozart—however he is the image of good humour & there is Mr. Holmes—Werter the II—passionately fond of music & playing well—& almost in appearance overpowered with the notes his fingers strike. Mrs. Novello is there ever smiling—& *all* the children Victoria—*che poi e piut[t]-osto* [? *vienttina*].—Alfred who is a nice looking boy—the rest I forget except Mary, two years & a half old—the flower of the flock, the only pretty one among them—like I guess [? *Nony*], from Marianne's description of him; & Novello shaking his sides—enjoying his own & your pleasure as he plays—& looking smiling despair when the tingle of a tea spoon clashes with his melody.

Messrs. N[ovello] & C[larke] walked part of the way home with us—& I laid hold of the former that I might talk of your affairs to him. I mentioned to him your brother's proposition of referring the question of the E[xaminer] to him & Procter. Novello objected to being a party on the sole score of not understanding the business & feeling himself incapable in consequence of doing justice to either—he mentioned Mr. Colson<sup>7</sup> as a fitter person—saying that he had opportunities of proving him & was certain that you had not a more zealous friend in the world. He spoke very highly of your brother, as a man of high honour & generosity (I repeat his words) but allowed that

<sup>7</sup> Walter Coulson.

Henry in every way was not a person to whom all the interests of *your* family ought to be confided. He thought no time ought to be lost (not a moment) in arranging the terms of this affair—& mentioned that perhaps it wd. be best for each brother to name a friend—though Colson as the friend of both wd. equally represent both interests & Procter be in—because it is right to have two in such a case. Such, dear friend, was the result of my conversation with Novello—than whom none wd. appear more warm hearted zealous & friendly towards you— He had not had a hint on the subject before— I took him unawares and thus all he said sprung solely from himself.

Have you thought of your notice for Shelley's works—they will all be printed mingled with what has not before been published— I want very much the Cyclops & Essay on devils. I am now busy writing an article for the *London*<sup>8</sup>—after which I shall begin a novel—not Alfred—more wild & imaginative & I think more in my way. Novello will help it greatly—as I listen to music (especially instrumental) new ideas rise & develope themselves, with greater energy & truth that [than] at any other time—thus I am becoming very fond of instrumental music of which before I was more careless—singing confines ones thoughts to the words—in mere playing they form a song for themselves which if it be not more in harmony with the notes at least is more so with ones tone of mind.

Well here is an end of my paper—but not of a tenth part of what I have to say— I intended to have said ten million of things which now I leave to your imagination— I was going to say why I think that you thought too hardly of me heretofore. I am after all the same as then—the same weak fluctuating creature—but not all you say—yet I dont like myself I promise you—either then or now. You can hardly point me out a person whose frame of mind I do not prefer to my own. But this, expressed in these few words will be almost unintelligible to you. And as my paper grows less & less I can only say, my dear Hunt, and dear, dear Polly that I am your

Affectionate friend

M W S

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—Italy. POSTMARKS: (1) Catherine St. Strand (2) Angleterra (3) Chambery (4) 23/ OTTOBRE. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley Adds. d.5, ff.71–72); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 240–44; *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1036–40. (Both incomplete, and dated 1824.) TEXT: From original letter.

## 197. *To Louisa Holcroft*

Octr. 2nd [1823]

14 Speldhurst St., Brunswick Sq.

My dear Louise

I have not written to you but I have not forgotten you or Versailles, or

<sup>8</sup> In 1824 two of Mary's contributions (hitherto unidentified) were published in the *London Magazine*. In the March issue (IX, 253–56) appeared an essay, "On Ghosts," half of which is almost an exact reproduction of a tale which she had written into her journal in Italy. In the

the Caffè Françoise or your young ladies who get happiness through demonstration & Q. E. D. How are you all? How is Mrs. Kenny with her kind heart? How is Mr. Kenny whom we walked until he had a sprained ankle. I have been here a month—seeing few people & wishing alack! that I were in Italy, & yet finding myself tied by the leg. If I talk of cloudless skies, my father becomes cloudy, & seems to have my stay so much at heart, that it seems selfish in one so useless as I am, to be worse than useless and give pain. And yet I get very impatient with rainy days, Hackney coaches, spoiled pelisses, “Round & round, two pence a pound”—cold firesides, dull newspapers & the rest of the daily round. What I enjoy is my quiet which I could get better in Italy, & the best friend I have here [Jane Williams] would go with me if I went. And I *could* go for I fancy that my father-in-law will make me an allowance, which though poor enough here would be riches in dear Italy. He has already given me a present supply<sup>1</sup>—so that much good at least has been accomplished by my journey though I am sorry to say that I do not think that I look any *taller* than I did at Versailles, nor hold my *head higher*, which perhaps Mr. Kenny meant— I only do that in Italy where I should be a great lady on £200 per ann[um] and ramble about mountains & chestnut woods until I should tire you all out. I am well here as so is my boy, whom (though he does not speak a word of English) I can leave for a few hours without his tormenting his keeper as he did poor kind Ellen.

I dare say you will wonder what change I find in London—and I must, say of it, as I did of you, that it is very much grown—& grown out of my knowledge too which was never very extensive: but now I think I could find my way better on foot to the Coliseum at Rome than hence to Grosvenor Square—ought I not to go by Fenchurch St. through Park lane and so to Fetter lane which is not far off from Grosvenor Sq. any one will tell me if I ask— But then they speak bad English with so vulgar an accent that I am in despair. I walked up Holborn Hill the other day repeating to myself Oh when shall I be in Italy again! Why did I ever leave my dolce Nido!

I saw your sister Fanny for a few minutes about 3 weeks ago she seemed very well. I saw Lamb who did not say that I was grown or even altered. Mrs. G.——<sup>2</sup> tells me I look 16—but unluckily strangers unwittingly tell me I look 30. A French Gentleman (in France) who wanted to be very polite, on my mentioning my having seen the Louvre asked me if it was during the peace of Amiens which was, I think in —97 the year I was born! and an English gentleman in an English stage hearing I had been at Naples asked me if I was there [*MS torn*] Lady Hamilton made common cause against [ ] which event took place I think some[ ] Lamb has been ill hitherto but I

April issue (IX, 357–63) appeared “The Bride of Modern Italy,” a tale, which is Mary’s first literary use of the Emilia Viviani episode. Emilia appears as Clorinda, and Shelley as an English artist of seventeen years. The story is of considerable biographical significance.

<sup>1</sup> Of £100. See Letter 194.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Gisborne or Mrs. Godwin? Did Louisa Holcroft know the Gisbornes?

expect [ ] house on Saturday & shall be delighted to see [ ] your message.

Adieu my dear Louise— My love to your mother, whom for more reasons than one I should be very glad to see again, i.e. at Versailles— I have but one reason to wish to see her here. My best remembrances to Mr. Kenney. Has Elen [*sic*] forgiven [ ] forgotten the trouble I gave her—and James and [ ] & Therese & the young Hercules whose name [ ] they all

Most faithfully yours  
Mary W Shelley

ADDRESS: Miss Holcroft/ Dieu vous Venisse/ Versailles, &c. &c. &c. ORIGINAL: Not traced. In 1936 the Brick Row Book Shop, New York, had a manuscript "Copy of letter from Mrs. Shelley in the possession of Kenny," the maker of which copy is not known. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From MS copy referred to above.

### 198. *To Thomas Jefferson Hogg*

14 Speldhurst St., Brunswick Square  
October 18 [1823]

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

### 199. *To Leigh Hunt*

[London] October 20th [1823]

You will be gratified to hear, dear Hunt, that I celebrated your birthday yesterday at the Novellos. He is such a worshipper of yours that it seems to make him ten years younger to do anything to your honour, and this animated his playing, while he sighed over it— That Hunt were here! We had there Frank Novello whom I delight to see; he transports me into Italy by his very best kind of Italian face, manners and speech; his voice too is very delightful, and was the only very good voice there— How we missed you in the duets — There was a Mr. Evans treble, and Charles Robertson tenor. He sang with spirit but he wants power sadly. He is looking much older than when I saw him at Ham[p]stead, and he is almost the only person in whom I perceive much change—he made one good pun— They were laughing at him for the pretty figure he cut as Susannah and when he bowed to F. N. saying "now I think Susanna has a very pretty *Figaro* (figure)" There was the E[merald] P[in] and Caro Sposo. She was remarkably quiet thinking of old times I suppose. There was my dear Jenny to whom—Ah Perdona! gave a great headache — There was Mr. G. Gliddon just returned from *patria mia*, loving it almost as much as I, and looking the picture of content and good humour— There was of course Mr. Clarke with a face like a bird's skull and Werter II, i.e. Mr. Holmes— You know how delightfully Novello selects and arranges music for such a party—we had first Church music—among it *Mi lasci Madre Amata*

—Deh prendi un dolce semplicezza the Priests song in the Lauberfläut, and your March in Alceste arranged for sacramental psalms—then we had Ah, perdona—sung by H. R. and F. N.—but not sung as you have sung it—the passion and expression of your voice in certain parts of that—and in the breathless conclusion could not be equalled by these (There, Polly!) After this, airs from Figaro con fan tutte and D. G. had their turn until the singers were quite exhausted. There sat Novello, giving the keys an expression no other creature ever gave, every now and then at a favourite passage, a smile stealing over his features, and giving a little side glance to see who sympathized with him. In short, dear Hunt, if you and my best Marianne had been there the evening would have been perfect. Nor would Mar. have sat like a stone; everybody was occupied by music and when at supper the spirits rose to drink “Leigh Hunt’s Health” there was nothing to shock her—for neither Jenny or I were anything but pleased— I gave way a little to the “giddy school girl”— After a glee or two the coach came along side and a long after walk from Shacklewell— William [Godwin, Jr.] makes himself my squire, and he finds the Novellos an immense acquisition for he is passionately fond of music and I was housed by two and now the next morning write to make you enter into some of the pleasure that was animated by your spirits, which seemed looking over us as your Mercury from its pedestal actually did.<sup>1</sup>

Since beginning to write this letter I have seen your brother. It is useless mentioning business until I have had your answers to my letters on those subjects for which I am very anxious. With regard to what you say of the L[iterary] E[xaminer] you know I perfectly concur—but it is established to change would have a bad effect— That the dropping of the L. would so affect any new periodical work you undertook that I am convinced that you wd. have to wait many numbers without reaping any profit—until the public were satisfied that it would continue—you cd. not afford that. The Indicator has an excellent name—the worst of it, is, that in its present form it cannot be bound up with the old Indicator which is a great drawback. As to a Quarterly or Monthly Magazine—besides what I have already said—you being abroad—it must have a competent Editor—a literary one—neither your brother or nephew are fit for the task— I am anxious too to hear what you do about a Notice for S[helley]— I am yet undecided whether to print a vol[ume] of unpublished ones or the whole together— I encline to the former—as it wd. be a specimen of how he could write without shocking any one—and afterwards an edition of the whole might be got up inserting any thing too shocking for this vol. but I shd. be very glad of your opinion. Your brother tells me that you are going into the country. I am very sorry for this. You will have no evening society, nor ever be drawn out to the Opera, &c.—You will not find so many conveniences for a winter residence in any Italian country house

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. (Mary Sabilla) Novello also wrote Hunt an account of this birthday party at her house. Her letter is printed in *The Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 208–10.



as in the town. Albaro was one of the best I ever saw and si figuri the cold there. In short you might as well be in the great desert as in Italy if you are in the country in the winter. Not that it wd. be so with every one—but I *know you*, my friend. With all your likings and talents for society you must be sought and drawn out—that cannot happen—and for heaven's sake take care you do not get outside a gate that shuts alle venti quattro—if my opinion and wishes have any weight do not go into the country in the winter. And my dear Polly! she is ill again; how truly sorrowful this is—she must take care of herself—she ought to be relieved from her weight of domestic cares but how? Except for this ill news your last letter was very gratifying to me. I saw that I was not misunderstood—and I feared that I should be so— Moreover I saw that you sympathized with me—and that was quite right— I have a world of things to say to you on that and many subjects—but they must be *said* and when will that be? I detest England more and more—its fogs rains and wind are bolts bars and high walls in the way of enjoyment, even if one had money, and with so little as I have they are insurmountable. In short, I wish ardently for Italy, and would give ten worlds to have celebrated y[ou]r birthday with you at Florence, delighted as I was by the [? Naiadne] of Sweet Sounds at the Novellos— I often think you may return except that it appears impossible. Marianne's health, your own—want of money—and yet you wd. enjoy yourself more here, and once set a going here, if you cd. keep y[ou]r health, wd. earn double what you get there. But there are so many ifs—that prophesy veils her eyes, and hope hardly dares raise hers as the Chariots of the Hours pass, bringing with them the Unknown To Come. Adieu, my dear friends, very Patient and Patient very—I do not know when I shall finish this letter—but with so large a paper before me—it appears to me best to write this journal wise—and bring you as nearly as possible in contact with scenes that want you both only to be perfectly delightful—

your Exile—

M. W. S.

(Oct. 26th.) I went to sup the other night at the Lambs— They have a house at Islington looking over the New River— I cannot say much for the beauty or rurality of the spot but they are pleased. They were both in good humour. Lamb told us (William was with me) that he once made a fable for a Peacock and Hog— Said the Hog—why go you flaunting about—spreading your tail and waving your neck. Do you not know that beauty is only skin deep? —Replied the Peacock—O good Mr. Hog, how can you say so? I am sure if your beauty was but half as deep as your skin—how handsome you would be. Mrs. Payne<sup>2</sup> is I hear returned—I have not seen her. She has not of course got my watch—do not think I am impatient and so send it by any but the safest of safe hands—but I do want it— Last night Jane and I were at the Gliddons with the Novellos. We passed a pleasant

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 196, note 5.

evening. The E[merald] P[in] is cheerful enough but more quiet than I expected tho' Mrs. N. says that she is the same as she always was— Mr. Novello is my *prediletto*. I like him better and better each time I see him—his excessive good nature, enthusiastic friendship for you—his kindness towards me and his playing have quite won my heart. William and I took a long walk today in the way to Shacklewell— I tried to like it—especially as next summer I must go into the country—(ahime Italia!) and shd. like to go near them. But it is all so ugly— Lamb says, speaking of its neighbourhood— “I like drab coloured fields”— I can endure them if they be sun parched and richly shaded by the fresh grapes but fire dried and embellished by brick kilns—oh questo—no! We dined at the Novellos— She only was at home— Vincenzo came in just as we were going away—but it was a pleasure to see him tho' but for a minute. This walk has tired me, somewhat in body—more in spirits—the dense clouds—and dull scenery made me think of other changes besides sun and mountains and streams. Alas, that I should have been in familiar intercourse with my lost one, wise, imaginative and feeling—what conversations we have had during our walks—now—I must get into the midst of books and study to recollect myself—raise myself from the vile every day life that clings to one— Good hearts (superlatively good—par excellence) have a poetry of their own—and it is sufficiently elevating to mingle with them—but where goodness is negative—the want of refinement and cultivation is amazing and depressing. If I do stay in this odious country any time I must accommodate my mode of life to my mode of thought—and abstract myself entirely where sympathy does not imperiously call me out. Oh what a change, dark and heavy has come over my scene of life—I struggle like an animal in a net— I can only at times, when I banish thought—endure it— To have lived in Italy wd. have been still to have kept a part of my Shelley—here—shades—well, never mind—good night—tomorrow—Greek shall lay this evil spirit in the company of Homer I am with one of his best friends—and in reading the books he best loved I collect his acquaintances about me. Adieu, dear Hunt, forgive me if I grumble a little—do you know I am a very good girl after all—ask Mr. Novello if I am not.

(Oct. 29th.) I have just written to Bessy to ask whether she has heard from you for your silence both public and private makes me anxious. I saw your brother today—he is in despair at the non appearance of Indicators. Something [ ] must have happened to cause this long suspension, yet no ill I trust dear Polly, when Hunt does not write, why do you not put pen to paper, just to say how you all are, what doing or suffering. One line indeed from you tells me more of the real *picturesque* state of you all than much from Hunt—but you neither of you write, and guessing on so momentous a subject is a most painful employment.

Hogg is come to town—He came to me immediately—and appears to me (con unacoradi meno) the same as ever. He looks uncommonly well in health.

I passed yesterday evening with him and Jane at the Gisbornes—this little set—Jane, gentle and elegant, Hogg witty, kind and queer, Mr. G[isborne] nobody—Mrs. G[isborne] inquisitive, humble, affectionate and clever and I—they call me an Avalanche non so troppo il perche—forse da qualch onni somiglianza al bichiere d'aca [*MS torn, affecting several lines*] together, find our places, and the evening passes delightfully— Henry [ ] quiet—knowing everything and always with some news about [ ]—which—God knows—may help change the appearance of the [ ] love her more and more—She is so affectionate, good and kind [ ] know—both being in love with the same person— Ah Polly—[ ] everybody—my oldest and newest friends—and they all assure me that [ ] as may have made me appear so—but I am sure that I am [ ] ment—Who shd. it be but your best friend—dear, kind, open [ ] Jane likes Mrs. N. and so perhaps may I—but she is not [ ] words that he is—and so as yet I prefer him.

I kept up my spirits but seeing Hogg was, as you [ ] dreadfully so—but afterwards during the evening, his voice was [ ] and words unaltered from what they used to be, associated as they are came often like poignards through me and made me aghast and sad at the miserable change— When in company I fly from these thoughts and take refuge in far greater gaiety than is otherwise natural to me. And once excited if some painful revulsion come not I easily forget myself—and at first carried away soon get beyond and carry with me the spirit of the company— This will be a strange letter before it is completed: tell me that you are pleased (and not perfectly tired out with this journal kind of writing and I will continue thus— It will at least let you see how I pass a part of my time. The rest is spent in solitude—reading—writing—studying— Adieu, I so hope to hear from you before I close this many wandering rigmarolle.

(Nov. 3rd). Having just heard from Bessy that she has not heard from you I send my letter, a swift footed courier, to entreat you to relieve us *all* from our painful suspense— I would fain persuade myself that it is only if solito modo—and that no sinister event occasioned this painful silence— Yet all things considered—I fear, and know not what to think. My S[helley]'s poems are ready— I publish now the unpublished only— I long to know whether you write [? for them] and what you write as that must determine me— I want the Cyclops particularly—you need not mind the Cyprian I shall copy that again— I want that part of my own Choice<sup>8</sup> I mentioned to you send these two things immediately. You had better address them to your brother— But at least, dear Hunt, or you, dear Polly, write and tell us how you all are.

I had several things to tell you but have no heart now. I saw Procter the other day, he says that he shall write to you. He has much pleased me by the way in which he speaks of our Shelley— How unlike L. B. and yet S[helley]

<sup>8</sup> Mary's autobiographical poem written in Italy some time after Shelley's death.

eclipses him more than the other. He is not well and that interests me also—as I told you before I have always a sneaking kindness for these delicately health'd Poets.—Poor Keats I often think of him now.

I saw the Novellos at my lodgings Sunday. N. enquired tenderly after you and is very anxious. Write then, good creatures, and relieve us—

Your affectionate Grandmother blesses you,

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—Italie. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 200. To Charles Ollier\*

Sheldhurst Street  
Oct<sup>r</sup> 28th [1823]

My dear Sir

Will you have the kindness to deliver into Mr. John Hunt's hands such copies of Mr. Shelley's works as you still retain.—I should be very glad of a single copy of *Alastor* if by any chance there should be one remaining.

I hope that Mrs. Ollier and yourself are in good health.

Your obedient Servant

Mary W. Shelley.<sup>1</sup>

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: H. Buxton Forman, *The Shelley Library* (1886), 109. TEXT: From *ibid.*

## 201. To Marianne Hunt

London, Novr. 27th [1823]

My dearest Polly,

Are you not a naughty girl? How could you copy a letter to that "agreeable unaffected woman, Mrs. Shelley" without saying a word from yourself to your loving Grandmother? My dear Polly, to own the truth, a line from you forms a better picture for me of what you are all about than—alas! I was going to say three pages, but I check myself,—than the rare one page of Hunt. Do not think that I forget you; even Percy does not, and he often tells me to bid the Signor Enrico and you to get in a carriage and then into a boat and to come to *questo paese* with Baby Nuovo, Henry, Swinburne and *tutti*— But that will not be; nor shall I see you at Mariano; this is a dreary exile for me. During a long month of cloud and fog how often have I sighed for my beloved Italy— And more than ever this day, when I have come to a conclusion with

<sup>1</sup> Ollier's interesting reply is dated November 17. He has, he says, complied with her request, and he encloses a list of the copies of Shelley's works turned over to John Hunt. "I have for some time been seeking for a copy of the '*Alastor*,' with a view to complete my own collection of Mr. Shelley's printed works. At length, I heard of a man who had a copy which he would dispose of. I have seen him and offered him his own price, and he has promised to bring it here to me. Should he do so, I will, to gratify your wish, forego the possession of it." The letter is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 990–91.

S[ir] T. S[helley] as to my affairs, and I find the miserable pittance that I am to have. Nearly sufficient in Italy—here it will not go half way—it is £100 p. an. Nor is this all; for I foresee a thousand troubles. Yet in truth as far as regards mere money matters and worldly prospects I keep up my philosophy with excellent success— Others wonder at this, but I do not, nor is there any philosophy in it. After having witnessed the mortal agonies of my two darling children, after that journey from and to Lerici, I feel all these as pictures and trifles as long as I am kept out of contact with the unholy. I was upset today by being obliged to see Whitton, and the prospect of seeing others of his tribe—I can earn a sufficiency I doubt not—in Italy I should be content, here I will not bemoan— Indeed I never do, and Mrs. Godwin makes *large eyes* at the quiet way in which I take it all— It is England alone that annoys me; yet sometimes I get among friends and almost forget its fogs. I go to Shacklewell rarely and sometimes see the Novellos elsewhere. He is my especial favourite, and his music always transports me to the seventh Heaven. I have seen Mrs. Blanc Hunt there. B. H. is the brother of that Monster Hunt who is concerned in a horrible murder, of which of course you have read, if you ever see Galignani. This is sufficiently distressing to her and she is so gentle and unaffected yet half timid that she inspires one with a wish to pay her distinguished attention. She was much gratified at hearing that you spoke of her, and begged her kindest compliments. I see the Lambs rather often—she is ever amiable, and Lamb witty and delightful— I must tell you one thing and make H. laugh. Lamb's new house at Islington is close to the New River, and George Dyer, after having paid them a visit, on going away, at 12 at noon day—walked deliberately into the water, taking it for the high road, "But" as he said afterwards to Procter, "I soon found that I was in the water, Sir." So Miss L[amb] and the servant had to fish him out. I must tell you also another thing, which will hardly make you laugh—and yet it will too— Your poor, dear favourite Mr. A——r had married you know beneath him and has at last produced his wife in Society—on being asked by a lady in company—Do you know a Mrs. Mitchel—Mrs. A——r replied— "I can't say I does, Ma'am, but the same Doctor as lays me, lays her." A——r is very fond of her they say, or as the lady expresses it— "Oh, A——r and me, we lives like doves." She is said to be beautiful— I must tell Hunt also a good saying of Lambs—talking of someone, he said, "Now some men who are very veracious are called matter of fact men—but Such-a-one I should call a matter-of-lie man."

I have seen also Procter with his "beautifully formed head" (it is beautifully formed) several times and I like him. He is an enthusiastic admirer of Shelley, and most zealous in the bringing out the volume of his Poems; this alone w[oul]d please me, and he is moreover gentle and gentlemanly, and apparently endued with a true poetic feeling— Besides he is an invalid—and some time ago I told you in a letter that I have always a sneaking (for sneaking, read open) kindness for men of literary and particularly poetic habits who

have delicate health; I cannot help revering the mind, delicately attuned, that shatters the material frame, and whose thoughts are strong enough to throw down and dilapidate the walls of sense and dikes of flesh that the unimaginative contrive to keep in such good repair. I have seen Peacock two or three times. He looks quite prosperous and I was pleased to hear him speak with feeling of his children— What wonder? you will say—truly, my dear, I have seen him so seldom go out of himself, that this most instinctive selfish-unselfishness sets him off to advantage. Mrs. P[eacock] is in the country—he goes down to her every Saturday. He says that Hogg is grown thinner and I suppose he is, since he is not, as you described him, fat; but is the same in person and in every thing (*una cosa di meno*) as ever, as far as I see, and his colour, which often changes, shews I think that his sensibility remains. I see him sometimes of an evening either here or at the Gisbornes—and every Sunday he takes a long walk with Mill and Colson. By the bye I must [not] forget to do away any false impression you may have received from Mrs. G[isborne]'s letter about him and Mrs. W[illiams] which was I think all a mistake.<sup>1</sup> I see nothing in his manner beyond that interest which every one must take in her, nor in her any consciousness of anything beyond. She is totally free from every particle of coquetry, and the beautiful simplicity of her character which S[helley] and I always admired, now displays itself in all its charms, and the affection I ever had for her is now much strengthened—it is my and I think her greatest delight when we spend hours together talking of one subject only and living over and over again in memory our happy months.

After all I spent a great deal of my time in solitude. I have been hitherto fully occupied in preparing Shelley's MS.—it is now complete, and the poetry alone will make a large volume. Will you tell Hunt that he need not send any of the MS. that he has (except the Essay on Devils and some lines addressed to himself on his arrival in Italy, if he should choose them to be inserted) as I have recopied all the rest. We should be very glad however of his notice as quickly as possible, as we wish the book to be out in a month at furthest and that will not be possible unless he send it immediately; it would break my heart if the book should appear without it— When he does send a packet over (let it be directed to his brother) will he also be so good as to send me a copy of my "Choice" beginning after the line, "Entrenched sad lines or blotted with its might."—Perhaps, dear Marianne, you would have the kindness to copy them for me, and send them soon. I have another favour to ask of you. Miss Curran has a portrait of Shelley<sup>2</sup> in many things very like; and she has so much talent that I entertain great hopes that she will be able to make a good one: for this purpose I wish her to have all the aids pos-

<sup>1</sup> In her letter of March 17, 1823, to Mary, Mrs. Gisborne had cited considerable evidence to show that Hogg was already in love with Jane Williams. Subsequent events proved Mrs. Gisborne a sharper observer than Mary. Mrs. Gisborne's letter is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 923–28.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter 141, note 2.

sible and among the rest a profile from you. If you c[oul]d not cut another, perhaps you would send her one already cut, and if you sent it with a note requesting her to re[turn it after she (*MS torn*)] had done with it, I will engage that it will be most fai[thfully returned]. At present I am not quite sure where she is, but [ ] should be there and you can find her and send her this, I need [not tell] you how you would oblige me—you w[oul]d oblige "Henry"—if he thus got a good portrait.

I heard from Bessy that Hunt is writing something for the Examiner for me; I conjecture that this may be concerning Valperga— I shall be glad indeed when that comes, or in lieu of it, anything else— John Hunt begins to despair, since he says that without the Indicators the L[iterary] E[xaminer] must fail. That the E[xaminer] is so constituted now, on account of the admission of Advertisements, that any thing not immediately of the day c[oul]d not be printed in it—and that he despairs of the possibility of setting up anything new.

And now, dear Polly, I think I have done with gossip and business—with words of affection and kindness I should never have done. I am inexpressibly anxious about you all; Percy has had a similar though shorter attack to that one at Albaro, but he is now recovered— I have a cold in my head occasioned I suppose by the weather— Ah Polly—if the beauties of England were to have only the mirror that Richard III desires, a very short time w[oul]d be spent at the Looking Glass— What of Florence and the Gallery— I saw the Elgin Marbles today—tomorrow I am to go to the Museum and look over the prints—that will be a great treat. The Theseus is a divinity—but how very few statues they have. Kiss the children— Ask Thornton for his promised and forgotten P.S. Give my love to Hunt and believe me, dear Marianne, the exiled but ever

Most affectionately yours,

Mary W. S.

[P.S.] Trelawny writes to me that he wishes Hunt to send his letter to him to me.

When Hunt writes to Mr. Brown or Severn w[oul]d you ask him to make enquiries about a Sculptor of the name of *Gott*—how he is and how his family is— I ask on account of a friend of his Mr. Smith of the British Museum—who is anxious to know.

ADDRESS: Mrs. Leigh Hunt/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze, Italie/ Florence—Italy.  
POSTMARK: 1823. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: (All incomplete)  
*Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 128–33; *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 991–96;  
Marshall, II, 101–104; *Letters*, 129–35. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 202. To Leigh Hunt

London, Dec. 11th [1823]

My dear Hunt,

I am much annoyed at all the vexation that you must have received from

your brother's letter; more particularly as much of it is gratuitous and if you had been in this country and could have seen him, the disagreeable tone that exists need never have been adopted. I have seen him several times and both Novello and I are certain that he intends to act in a strictly honourable manner. He is no inditer; he wishes to be conscientiously clear in his communications and cannot mix this up in writing with the real feeling that appears in his discourse. I know that in saying this I shall please you, and I will now tell you the substance of what he said.

I saw him on Tuesday, Dec. 9th when he appeared a good deal hurt by your letter and had, I am afraid replied to it in a no very conciliating manner; in fact feeling (I dare say chiefly on Henry's account) the necessity of making a definitive adjustment he was annoyed at your preventing it—for as he had left to you the choice of arbiters and expressed his determination of abiding by their decision, however unjust it might appear to him to be, he thought you unreasonable in not acceding. I saw him again yesterday, and after deliberation he had thought of two ways of settling the matter an account of which I believe he intends sending to you by tomorrow's post. But as he has the knack of giving an ungracious air to his written communications I will tell you what these are as he explained them to me. The first is: that such persons named should look into the accounts of the Examiner, and decide what sum for past labours you should receive, and this should be charged as a perpetual annuity on the paper, and be payable to you and your heirs for ever—and it may be added that if the sale of the paper should ever rise above a certain number this annuity should be encreased—and besides that you should have the right of supplying the Examiner with articles, for which you shall be paid, as your brother says, at such a rate as shall fully content you. His second proposition does not please him so well, perhaps it may please you more than the first—that these persons should decide what he (J. H.) ought to receive for the labour of editing, and after that is paid that the remaining profits on the paper should be divided between you; you also having the right of writing for the paper and being paid for your articles.—Such are your brothers proposals. I saw Novello this morning and he is to see J. H[unt] on Saturday after which he will write to you his feeling and opinion on the subject; I write therefore only to ease your mind and you had better not reply until you have received Vincenzo's letter this affair must come to some certain conclusion; minor points and past events had better be forgotten; and if these proposals do not please you, I think, my dear friend, that you and Marianne had better talk the matter over and make one yourselves, that is to regard the future only. Vincenzo entreats me to tell you that he hopes that you do not doubt for a moment his wish to give you any pleasure or undertake any labour for you, and that if you insist that he will accept the office of arbiter; but he is so little conversant in such matters that he is afraid that he might injure you even when he most wishes to serve you. He thinks that it w[oul]d



be better to name 3 than 2 persons for this task; and that perhaps your brother had better have the naming of the third; but if you name him, he thinks Coulson the best person as one fully competent in such a question. I think that if you had your brother only to deal with, all this would be needless; but you naturally look forward to the possibility of its being a question between cousins instead of brothers—and for every reason the affair had better be ascertained and established immediately, for if in future you had Henry to deal with instead of his father the exchange would be by no means pleasing. So much for business.

You make one indeed guilty of one of the seven deadly sins (*invidia*) when you talk of summer weather: cloud, rain, fogs, dirt, such are the alternations of our genial sky—it is, this blessed paese a prison and the worst of prisons— God only knows when I shall revisit my *dolce nido*, but I sigh bitterly for it—this winter at Rome instead of here—I may not dream of such bliss.—My great consolation here is music; the music with which Vincenzo and his friends provide me: I go to the chapel; I have been with Mrs. V. to a concert that they have established and I hear it at his house. He has made me a convert to Haydn— Do you know the piece, “A new healed world”—in his *Creation*; what a wonderful stream of sound it is; it puts me in mind of those beautiful lines of Milton “Untwisting all the chains that tie The hidden soul of harmony”<sup>1</sup>—by the bye I have asked you, but you *never* reply to one’s letters to mention to me what that piece of Handel is of which you only know a few bars. I hope Marianne has received my letter and will answer it and all in it—and do a part of what I [asked] her especially about the profile which I very much wish to be [in] Miss Curran’s hands and I am sure that you will be repaid [for a] *temporary* concession by the nearest likeness to our Shelley that can now be had.

I shall see Bessy today; and as this letter does not go untill tomorrow so I may add a word or two more. You did not seal with my seal *al solito*— I have asked Mrs. Mason if she knows of a safe hand by which the watch may come to me to send it and this will spare you further trouble about it.—It is a very great inconvenience to me not to have it, being an English one there is no trouble in getting it into this country, so if you have a *very* safe hand send it without waiting for Mrs. M[ason].— Do you remember your promise of asking Severn for a copy of one of his portraits of Trelawny—if I were rich I would claim, in a different manner from what I now can do, his promise to Shelley of a likeness of Keats. Adieu, my dear friend, my love to Marianne and your chicks. Percy remembers them all, and in particular Thornton, Baby Nuovo and Henry— He talks bad English now—and has a cough and a cold—*ma core vuole*—*inquesto inferno gia si sa*— I am not always in spirits but if my friends say that I am “good,” contrive to fancy that I am so and so continue to love yours most truly

Mary Shelley

<sup>1</sup> *L’Allegro*, lines 143–44.

[P.S.] Do you not think that as the notice that you have written for our S[helley] is now to be prefixed to a volume of his works that it will require much alteration—and his lordship's note be at least left out—he need only be alluded to—yet not disagreeably either— I w[oul]d not that the notice on such a subject sh[oul]d excite inimical feeling in any person

As your brother must give up he says the L[iterary] E[xaminer] this adjustment would free you from the necessity of writing for him; and if at present you did not begin any new work I doubt not that your articles w[oul]d receive very high pay from any periodical publication.

With regard to the arbitrators I have seen Miss Lamb and she assured me that her brother w[oul]d feel himself wholly incompetent to the task— I did not (by Novello's advice) shew him the letters—but Miss L[amb] said that she felt sure he w[oul]d refuse.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta,/ Firenze, Italie./ Italy-Florence.  
ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 996-99;  
Marshall, II, 111 (quot., 3 lines). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

### 203. To Vincent Novello

[London] Monday [c. February 2, 1824]

My dear Vincenzo

I was somewhat rash when I promised to send you Hunts next letter—for it has so happened that my letter just received contains such allusions to the affairs of a friend of his & mine that I cannot send it— He writes also to you (I judge so at least from an expression of his letter) & thus there is less need. However as you may not have received yours I will tell you what he says—first he writes in very good spirits infinitely pleased at the settlement made concerning the Examiner,<sup>1</sup> although I am yet to learn, what the arrangement is that he agrees to, & he refers me to his letters to his brother which when I get, I will dispatch to you. His health is better he says—& he entreats me if his brother refuses to publish his *Bacchus* in Italy<sup>2</sup> to get it from him & sell it for him at the best price I can— As if I were a good person to do such a deed—however I must perform my best— He says “New years day was indeed a new years day— I received all your letters on it, & read them with a change of feeling inexpressible”—this is indeed good news—& he adds “I shall be getting up articles for the *Examiner*—the old word inspires me. Why cannot you take a run over with the Novello expedition & see our vineyards—”

I write “con furia” as I have not a moment to spare and yet wish to save a post— I have received a letter also from Trelawny<sup>3</sup> in Greece which I have

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 195, note 5.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt's *Bacchus in Tuscany*, a Dithyrambic Poem, from the Italian of Francesco Redi, published by John Hunt in 1825.

<sup>3</sup> Trelawny's letter, dated October 24, 1823, is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 981-89.

not yet had time to read When shall I see you all—you promised to call—this week— Give my best love to Mrs. Novello.

Affectionately ys

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Poor Jane suffered for her freak—the damp gave her spasms in her chest & she suffered dismally for 24 hours—she is now quite free from pain but weak— Kindest messages to your Cavalieri.

ORIGINAL: British Museum (Add. MSS 11,730, f.180); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to.  
UNPRINTED AND UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 204. *To Leigh Hunt*

Feb. 9th [1824] London

My dear Hunt

I intend to write you but a short letter—& should even have deferred writing at all but that we have begun to print and I am anxious to receive your MS. As in the latter part of your letter you say that you will send it immediately upon my asking for it I need hardly answer what you say about putting off the publication for a year— Alas, my dear friend, “there is a tide in the affairs of men”— Shelley has celebrity even popularity now—a winter ago greater interest would perhaps have been excited than now by this volume—but who knows what may happen before the next— Indeed I have given my word to several people—it has been advertised—& moreover, do you, my best friend—assist me in making it complete—send me what you prepare; for it is not yet too late—but if you wait to exchange more letters it will be.

I am very glad to hear that my good Polly has written and that I am to have the letter—se dio vuole—some time or other—and I wish that in return I could send you a budget of good news—but what is there good in the world & above all [in this] miserable country. The Novellos are at Shacklewell—they have just [moved what] remained of their furniture from Percy St. & Mrs. N[ovello] has been so engaged in arrang[ing] that I have not seen much of them for nearly a month— I saw the Lambs last night & they were quite well— Mrs. Williams is well—but as impatient as I of England & the rest of it—she bears herself up very well—but it is very—very hard to fall from the enjoyment of life to a living death.—You have of course heard of the event of your brother’s trial<sup>1</sup>— All the world cries out about it—& the Court itself seems displeased with the officiousness of the prosecutors—yet 12 men were found who could give a verdict of guilty— The judgement is not yet passed, & probably will not be yet awhile—for the judges say that they have too much to do—casting an eye perhaps on a paper which your brother holds when he

<sup>1</sup> John Hunt was brought to trial for publishing Byron’s *Vision of Judgment* in the first number of the *Liberal*. The trial took place on January 15, 1824, when Hunt was found guilty. But judgment was deferred until July 19, when he was fined £100 and required to “enter into securities, for five years, for” £2000.—Blunden, *Leigh Hunt*, 205. Byron stood staunchly by Hunt and intended to pay all fines and expenses. His death made matters more difficult for Hunt.

attends their Lordships' leisure—& not knowing how long they may be kept—Do not frown at this *scherzo*—upon the whole I am much prepossessed in your brother's favour—he called on me the day before he expected to be sent to prison—expressed his great pleasure in your having agreed to his arrangements—& evinced a sensibility in his manner of which I did not judge him capable—poor fellow! he is hardly used in this world—but *così va il mondo*—

Do you know I have drawn on him for his theatrical ticket for D[rury] L[ane] till I am half ashamed—& yet go on—the truth is, I have been delighted with Kean<sup>2</sup>—he excites me & makes me happy for the time—& in addition the idea of writing a tragedy<sup>3</sup> "*that last infirmity of noble minds*"<sup>4</sup> has come over me—and though as yet I have thrown all my halting verses into the fire—yet I still dream of the buskined muse & see Kean partly as a study—I wish to do anything to get rid of my enemies—the blue devils—I try hard—every now an[d] then I cut off a head of the hydra—but two pop up instead of one *ed eccomi li*—

I spoke to your brother about the Bacchus—he said that he had offered it to Colburn who declined—& meant to offer it to others—I will see him soon about it & try what can be done— Ultra Crepidarius<sup>5</sup> does not sell—Gifford is out of fashion—quite forgotten—and even your lines will not stir the waters of oblivion in which he has sunk.—Write your articles, write your Indicators—your wishing cap<sup>6</sup>—it is thus you will make money—the grand desideratum with us groveling mortals—as for me *bien mauvais grè* I write bad articles which help to make me miserable—but I am going to plunge into a novel, and hope that its clear waters will wash off the mud of the magazines—

Oh that you w[oul]d answer a letter! Perhaps Marianne will—What of Miss Curran what of the promised profile of my Shelley—what of his verses to you. You ask me what authority I have for asking for Trelawny's letters.—I only asked for one & it was because he referred me to it in one to me & said that he hoped you w[oul]d send it—

This is a shabby letter— I write at this moment only to entreat you to send the notice for our volume (send it directed to your brother) as soon as possible)— Adieu good friends—be well, happy & good so prays

Yr. exiled Grandmother—

Mary Shelley.

<sup>2</sup> Edmund Kean (1787–1833).

<sup>3</sup> Mary was quite serious about writing a tragedy. In fact, she wrote one and sent it to Godwin for criticism and advice. His reply (February 27, 1824, in Marshall, II, 106–108) is an excellent bit of analysis of his own and Mary's dramatic talents and of the requirements for successful dramatic writing. But it was so discouraging that Mary gave over her plans to write a play. In later years Mary regretted having given up and thought she might have succeeded.

<sup>4</sup> *Lycidas*, line 71.

<sup>5</sup> *Ultra-Crepidarius*, A Satire on William Gifford, was published in pamphlet form by John Hunt in 1823.

<sup>6</sup> Hunt's Wishing Cap Papers were a series of articles sent from Italy to the *Examiner*: "reminiscences of old friendly scenes and metropolitan haunts, occasionally varied with abstract matters and arguments. Between March [1823] and the end of 1824, twenty-one of these . . . were printed."—Blunden, *Leigh Hunt's "Examiner" Examined*, 117.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—Italie. POST-MARKS: (1) ANGLETERRE (2) FPP/ FE. 13/ 1824/ 7.NIGHT.7 (3) CHAMBERY (4) 28 FEBBRAIO. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2749); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 135–39. TEXT: From original letter.

205. *To Thomas Jefferson Hogg*[London] Nov. [*error for Feb.*] 11 [1824]

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

206. *To Edward John Trelawny*<sup>1</sup>

London, March [? &amp; 22, 1824]

My dear Trelawny,

I wish I could see you in your Ulyssean dress—your red and gold vest and sheep-skin capote— To you who are in Greece and see her foul as well as her fair side, she may appear barbarous and perhaps odious—but here, where all the every day annoyances of civilization press on one who has passed her best years out of its pale—that sunlit country and its energetic inhabitants seem so much more capable of bestowing pleasure on me than the crowded houses of London; and minus the shooting Turks and Woodcocks<sup>2</sup> I do most deeply envy your situation; the opportunities of seeing human Nature, and the interest you must feel in the strange aspect of humanity among these Greeks and Trojans.—One is always ready to throw the blame on the mere accidents of life— I might perhaps be as happy any where as here, and the delights of Italy might [be] torture to me—I cannot tell; I only know that as I am, I am miserable. The eight years that I passed with our lost Shelley does not appear a dream, for my present existence is more like that—surely his state is not more changed than mine. When I first came to England, change of scene, the seeing old friends and the excitement with which the uncertainty of my situation inspired me, made me, though not happy, yet pass the day unrepining. But now each hour seems to add a load of intolerable melancholy. While alone I can hardly support the weight—when with others, it is almost worse. I think of my converse with Shelley, his incomparable superiority, and besides that he was mine and loved me; I think of Edward; of his virtues and pure friendship, till my heart sinks— The greatest pleasure I have is in company with Jane—when we talk over old times for hours— My other friends are good and kind, but they are so perfectly unlike all that I have been accustomed to, that I enter into a new world when I see them— It is to Jane only that I ever mention Shelley— Do you remember, dear friend, our talks over the fireside at Genoa— God knows how wretched I was there; and yet it seems a happy time in comparison to the present—am I indeed Mary Shelley?

<sup>1</sup> Mary's letter is a reply to Trelawny's letter of October 24, 1823, from the Isle of Hydra, Greece, which is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 981–89.

<sup>2</sup> Trelawny wrote: "I have decided on accompanying Ulysses to Negropont, to pass the winter there, there being excellent sport between Turk and woodcock shooting."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 985.

The Mary Shelley who gave you almond billet doux during our Pisan regales? and who erred into wildness, untamed as she was by any sorrow?—Mary Shelley now is but a ghost of that—but I will not vex you with my repinings—It is a pleasure to me at least to write to you to recall images of the past, which you also will remember with pleasure—to think that I shall see you once more, and to know that in the mean time your kind, generous heart feels compassion and affection for me.

But instead of these useless repinings I had better fill my paper with what news may interest you—and though that is not much, yet it is always agreeable to learn something from the land of the living while in exile (though in pleasant exile) from it. First Jane has settled her affairs in India<sup>3</sup>—she will have no great things—not sufficient to live upon in this country—but she has something secure. Her guardian is dead, and her guardian's heir is very kind to her; he is rich and generous, and although of course she would not avail herself of the qualities—yet it is pleasant to know that there is a post to lean on during the accidents of life.—No one has heard from Claire since last July—this is very cruel of her, since she must be aware that we must all be very anxious about her. I strive to think that her silence is occasioned only by her love of mystery or some other caprice—but I am made very uncomfortable about it. There has been no change in my situation, except that some circumstances induce me to believe that my father-in-law intends to be more generous towards me than he professed—but I cannot tell until next June, when my quarter is due. As it is—living with the greatest economy, I do not want for money—I lead the same life writing and reading and seeing a few people—dull and monotonous enough, since every hour I detest London and its—infernal (one must use expressive words on some occasions) climate more and more. I saw Miss Whitehead<sup>4</sup> the other day. She is at Islington, but talks of going into the country soon—she said that your cousin was well.—By the bye, I wrote to Mrs. Mason about the remainder of the Will which you say Mr. H. Browne had from the people from whom we rented a house at the Baths of Pisa<sup>5</sup>—in her reply she says: "The result of my inquiries is

<sup>3</sup> Jane's history is obscure. Born in 1798, she went out to India with her brother, John Wheeler Cleveland, who eventually rose to the rank of general. "Jane married an officer, probably named Johnson, who deserted her, or whose barbarity forced her to leave him. This marriage persisted as the chief difficulty of her life. She fell in love with Edward Ellecker (or Elliker) Williams. . . . He had been born in India the year after Shelley—1793, was at Eton in 1805, and held a commission in the 8th Dragoon Guards, serving in India. He retired on December 30, 1816."—Sylva Norman (ed.), *After Shelley: The Letters of T. J. Hogg to Jane Williams* (London, H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1934), xiv. See Letter 109, note 4.

<sup>4</sup> Trelawny wrote: "If Miss Whitehead calls on you, let her read this letter."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 989.

<sup>5</sup> In his letter of September 6, 1823, from Cephalonia (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 974–75), Trelawny had written (page 975): "My chief motive of writing is to inform you of a most singular discovery. . . . A Mr. Hamilton Brown, with a Greek mistress, lived last year at the same lodgings you had when at the Baths of Pisa; during his residence there, a woman of the house gave him some loose sheets of paper, which turned out to be a will or deed of Shelley's; every separate sheet was signed by him and witnessed; he thinks the first part is not amongst them, but is not certain, for he, conceiving it was only a copy, took no note of it; he has it, however, with his paper left

that no papers whatever were found after your departure, consequently no person can be in possession of the Document you mention by that means: Mrs. Turbati (the woman of the house) added that had there been any papers, she must have found them, as she always examines every part of the house herself the moment strangers leave it." There is probably some mistake in the place—you described the papers so accurately that I cannot doubt of their being those I sought— I wish I could have them as soon as possible. I know exactly the place where Mr. H. Browne got them.

(March 22nd). Mr. Hamilton Browne called on me today which was a great pleasure to me, since he is the only person I have seen who has been in your company since we parted on the hill of Albaro. He tells me that a vessel sails for Greece next Thursday, so I finish this letter and will send it by this opportunity with a few books— I enquired for works upon Greece but could hear of none. Opinions vary much with regard to these last Cantos of Don Juan;<sup>6</sup> they are usually considered as a falling off—and so they are in many respects, they want the deep and passionate feeling of the first—but they are unequalled in their strictures upon *life* and flashes of wit— These are almost our only novelties; Lady Morgan's *Life of Salvator Rosa* is pronounced dull—St. Ronan's *Well*<sup>7</sup>—one of the worst of the Great Unknown—The reviews I never read.—What more? I have been to the theatre several times to see Kean. I never was more powerfully affected by any representation than by his Sir Giles Overreach<sup>8</sup>—the best scene is worked up to a pitch of passion that I could not have imagined— His tones and looks often remind me of you—and but *that* is not your stage—your Greek dress—pistols—Suliotés and Woodcock shooting are more in your way. Covent Garden was nearly deserted till they brought out a comedy by that ranter Croly—by which it would seem that the proverb is a true one, that says, that extremes meet—for this comedy<sup>9</sup> is, they say, as broad, vulgar and farcical, as his tragic vein is high flown and bombastic—it succeeds prodigiously.—Parliament is met here and Canning is making a figure—he does not seem at all to like the part he was forced to play with regard to Spain, and said in the House that he would not tacitly acquiesce in such another invasion as that of the French at the risk of any war. They are introducing some amelioration in the state of the slaves in some parts of the West Indies. During the debate on that subject Canning

at Leghorn, and I will take care to get it forwarded to you, as Mr. Brown returns to England in about four or five months; at present he is going to Greece with me; he was formerly, indeed, Secretary to General Maitland, at Corfu. Now you will know whether this is the lost deed or a copy, and if it is imperfect the woman at Pisa Baths may have the rest."

<sup>6</sup> Cantos XII, XIII, and XIV, published on December 17, 1823. Cantos XV and XVI were published on March 26, 1824.

<sup>7</sup> Lady Sydney Morgan, *Life of Salvator Rosa*, 1823. Sir Walter Scott, *St. Ronan's Well*, 3 vols., 1824.

<sup>8</sup> Of Philip Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*.

<sup>9</sup> George Croly (1780–1860), a clergyman who gave most of his life to literature, being for the most part without a "living." His *Pride Shall Have a Fall*, a satirical comedy with eleven songs, was produced at Covent Garden on March 11, 1824; it was acted 24 times.—[J. Genest], *Some Account of the English Stage from 1660 to 1830* (Bath, 1832, 10 vols.), IX, 255–56.

paid a compliment to Frankenstein in a manner sufficiently pleasing to me. The town however is not full as yet, and the *winter* is not begun—and although the Opera House is crowded I have not seen there any of the first Grandees. Medwin is still in Paris—nor have either Jane or I heard from him since Christmas—a pretty fellow! Roberts is shooting in the Maremma with Capt. Hay— The Hunts are still at Florence—longing for England. How I wish I could change places with them! They would get on well if Hunt would write—but he does not— John Hunt has acted very well towards his brother in the main and I think him perfectly honourable though rough in manner. My volume of our Shelley's Poems is printing—it will be a good sized one.

After all this odious place agrees with me and I am very well. Indeed we have had a mild though rainy winter—and last week we had two really fine days— Percy is grown quite out of your knowledge— Poor Jane is by no means well just now and has during this winter grown fearfully thin— We shall go somewhere into the country in the summer, where I hope she will regain her health— She has been a great deal annoyed by her sister Mrs. Baird,—and I think that her illness has been to a great degree occasioned by this.

I heard the other day from the Guiccioli— She says L. B.'s behaviour to the Greeks has been generous in the extreme! H[amilton] B[rowne] says that his £4000 has already been repaid to him—he is [ ] in this—but how will he bear the news that Lord Blessington's bills in payment for the yacht<sup>10</sup> have been protested— I hope you are somewhat richer than you were last autumn—but you will never be rich—have as much money as you will— Tell me—by the bye if a Miss Anne Matthews ever resided with you and Mrs. T. in Wales— Is there any idea that Captain Henley will join in Greece—or the slightest hope that I shall see you soon again— Could you direct to me at the Examiner Office—38 Tavistock St. Covent Garden or through Hunt in Italy. [*This letter is incomplete.*]

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls (MS incomplete). UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 207. To J. A. Hessey\*

14 Speldhurst St.  
Burton Crescent  
May [1824]

My dear Sir

It would give me pleasure if you found a place for the enclosed article in

<sup>10</sup> Byron wrote to Charles F. Barry, his banker in Genoa, on December 23, 1823: "I regret Ld. Blessington's behaviour about the bill: you know that he *insisted* on buying the Schooner [the *Bolivar*], and had the bargain at his own price. If his bill is not paid, I must make it public, and bring the business, moreover, to a personal discussion . . . if he don't pay in one way, I must try another method of accomplishing."—Byron's *Works*: Letters and Journals, VI, 290.



your Magazine,<sup>1</sup> although I fear it comes rather late. If it be not inserted will you have the goodness to return it to me. You will favour me by not mentioning me as the author of it.

I conjecture that you have already received tributes due to the memory of our lost Poet, but as his friend I was impelled to contribute my mite, and to alleviate my sorrow for his loss by expressing the sincere admiration I had for his genius

I am Your obedient servant

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: J. A. Hessey Esq. ORIGINAL: Owned by Maggs Brothers in July, 1937; A.L.S., 2 pp. 12mo, with seal. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 208. [*To ? Bryan Waller Procter*]\*

[London] Saturday [June, 1824]

My dear Sir

You will I hope have received copies of the Poems<sup>2</sup> by this time.—As I do not know the address of Mr. Kelsall and Mr. Beddoes, will you have the goodness to forward copies to them. I have made out the enclosed list of errata [six items] which ought to be printed immediately—but I wished to ask you first, if in looking over the volume you found any additional errors

I am, dear Sir

Yours sincerely and obliged

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 2 pp. 12mo. Sold as item 347 in a sale of "First Editions," &c. at the American Art Ass'n and Anderson Galleries, April 14–15, 1937. Sale catalogue has a photograph of the letter. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Professor N. I. White from the auction sale catalogue photograph of the original letter.

## 209. *To Marianne Hunt*

London—June 13th [1824]

My best Polly—

You perhaps will wonder that you have not heard from me while I have been lost in conjecture as to [the] occasion of Hunt's silence. All I can say in my excuse is this. I have now a letter open before me addressed to you, dated May 9th beginning with these words—"I have delayed writing in expectation of an answer from Hunt; the delay on his part gives me hopes that he will

<sup>1</sup> J. A. Hessey of Taylor & Hessey, publishers of the *London Magazine*. Mary's article was not inserted. Byron died at Missolonghi on April 19, 1824. His body arrived in England on June 29; was placed in the house of Sir Edward Knatchbull-Hugessen, Great George St., Westminster, on July 5; and lay in state on July 9 and 10. On Monday, July 12, the funeral procession began at 11 A.M., passing up Highgate Hill towards Nottingham. On July 16 the body was buried in the family vault in the village church of Hucknall Torkard. See Ethel C. Mayne, *Byron*, 2nd Revised Edition (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons [c. 1924]), 437–42. See Letters 212 and 213.

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's *Posthumous Poems*. See Letter 195, note 1.

treat me at last with kindness and confidence and send me his MS.—in the mean time I will fill two sides of my paper and the[n] leave the third blank for some days more, in hopes that I may then fill it with acknowledgments for his envoy.”—This luckless third page was filled up on June 1st I then sealed my letter, and annoying circumstances have prevented my sending it—till now, I begin to think that I had better write another, at which task behold me occupied.—It is fifty ages since I heard any news of you, and I long excessively for a letter—how much more do I long that I were with you! truly my mode of life in England is little agreeable to me; my only comfort is in my child’s growth and health and in the society of Mrs. Williams. She had been seriously indisposed the whole winter and it is only on her recent removal from the smoke of London to Kentish Town (12 Mortimer Terrace!) that she has begun to recover—she is so thin—and then she in no way gives herself up, but struggles against debility and ill health to the very last, and is as cheerful as she can be in this cloudy land. The Natives call it summer, while they, as well as I, shiver [over a f]ire—the fields may well be green—being well watered—and when it [does not] rain, Nature kindly preserves their complexion by suspending over them a sunproof parasol of clouds— Yet, dear Hunt (if so, not being angry with me, you allow me to call you), the fields on the two!!! fine days we have had were superbly beautiful— I walked to Ham[p]stead Heath on one of them, & on another through the meadows which divide Ham[p]stead from the Regent’s Park & so home by Kentish Town. The smell of hay perfumed the air, the soft tall green grass starred by “buttercups that will be seen, whether you will see or no”<sup>1</sup>—the elms and grassy lanes all brought old times to my mind.—I long to get out to K. T. when I shall be near my Janey, but circumstances obliged me to delay my removal until the beginning of June, and now I cannot get lodgings there.—In the mean time I enjoy (when it does not rain) all I can of the country, by help of prodigious walks— Ye Gods—how I walk! and starve—because in spite of all I am too much *en bon point*— Cosa vuole? quel che dio vuole, sara, e ci vuol pazienza. My walks some times turn towards Shacklewell—that dreary flat—scented by brick kilns and adorned by carcasses of houses— The good kind hearts that inhabit it compensate for it, when once arrived, but it prevents frequent visits—and Mrs. Novello’s *circumstance* (as Pamela calls it) now almost entirely prevents her from coming to town. You will not see them in Italy this summer. I can bear witness that is not Mrs. N’s, but Vincenzo’s fault—he says that if he could bring you all back with him he would not hesitate—but his time would be so short—the way so long—and his pain at leaving you so great—that he puts the ounce of sweet meeting in an opposite scale to the pound of bitter parting, and lo! the smiles kick the beam and the sighs enchain him here.—The Gliddons are evidently a good deal cut up by the removal of their friends; they go there in the rain & return home

<sup>1</sup> Wordsworth, “To the Small Celandine,” lines 51–52.

weary—& the N's say that they will come—& then they do not—in fact the great pleasure of friendship, constant intercourse, is inevitably destroyed—Statia<sup>2</sup> (the “Yes, Mrs. Hunt”) is grown into a fine tall girl, and though she may not be brilliant is far from silly.—

I cannot I own conjecture why Hunt refused to join his name to mine in my publication<sup>3</sup>—I have been too little accustomed to be treated with suspicion, and am far too secure that I do not deserve it, to know how to conduct myself when treated thus unjustly—that is to say, if suspicion has been the cause of his refusal—I hope that you will soon receive a copy; and I hope that the preface will at least not displease him;—and yet it may—although I have done my best that it should not. During the dreary winter I passed at Genoa, in the midst of coldness & aversion I preserved my affection for Hunt, suspicion is deadly poison to friendship, but I will give mine *patience* as an antidote, and my naughty Very (Patient no longer) is & must [ever] be dear to me:—even though he disdains me—as he does.—

Have you heard from Trelawny? I am very anxious to have a letter, since none has been received by him since that which you forwarded. I wish that he had been at Missalunghi, since I doubt not that want of proper attendance caused the melancholy catastrophe of L[ord] B[yron]'s voyage, and his activity & kindness might have prevented it. We have heard from Claire since I wrote—poor girl! She is dismally tossed about, so much so that perhaps she may return to England— To exchange Italy for England is dreary work—but it must be pleasanter than Moscow after all— I think this is all the news that I can tell you—it is very, very long since I have seen Procter—he is much annoyed by his affairs & also by ill health— C. Lamb has suspended his Elias!<sup>4</sup>—My father's 1st vol. of the Hist[ory] of the Commonwea[l]th has come out & sells well I believe— I hope by next spring to publish myself—and shall work hard the moment I get into country lodgings—and before, if my removal continues to be delayed—

And what do you all do with yourselves—out of Florence, you must lead very recluse lives—and I fear all your spirits suffer from want of society— I see few—but those few often;—now Kean plays no more, my only public amusement is the opera, which is inexpressibly delightful to me.—The Good People of England have shewn taste in it— Notwithstanding Rossini being the fashion & his going to Carlton House & giving concerts under the patronage of the ladies of Almacks—the singers have each chosen Mozart for their Benefit.—That nice creature la Caradori began it by selecting Don Giovanni for hers, & played Zerlina as well (& that is saying every thing) as la Fodor.

<sup>2</sup> Clara Anastasia Novello, b. 1818.

<sup>3</sup> Hunt did write an essay on Shelley, but did not send it for insertion in the *Posthumous Poems*, either because it was not finished or because he had other plans for it. For its ultimate fate, see Letter 225, note 1.

<sup>4</sup> Since December, 1823, Lamb had published no *Elia* Essays in the *London Magazine*. He resumed publication in September, 1824.

Garcia was the Don—in one or two parts he surpassed Ambrogetti, but in others (in *la ci darem* particularly) he put me in mind of the *Union of Voices*, he was so full of graces—& then he pronounces Italian vilely: *il Begnis* made an enchanting Leperello he is full of comic talent & truly Italian— La Catalani took *Le Nozze di Figaro* for her benefit—we had an odious page but the rest was good—the pretty *la Begnis* made a sweet countess—and *Begnis* singing of *Le vuol Calare*, was incomparable—*sul'aria* was encored of course—there are one or two excellent airs in this piece which are spoiled because they devolve on inferior singers—*la Vendetta* for instance, which Francesco Novello fills full [of] animation & beauty is lost in the stupid Bartolo of the opera.—The town is extremely full—there are exhibitions of all kinds—two of the ruined city of Pompeii—which the painter has spoiled by covering the glowing earth with an English sky— There are several of fine old paintings which are to me drops of water in the desert— The Claude's bring all Italy before me[*sic*] eyes—& thus transport me to Paradise.—

(June 15th) After writing the above I went to St. P[aul's] Ch[urch] Y[ar]d to see Bessy concerning this debut of your brother, & it is settled that I go with them on Thursday—so I shall not close this letter until this is decided. Your mother was infinitely nervous—she spoke with great delight of a letter that she had received from you. Bessy is so changed that you w[oul]d hardly know her again; she is grown plump & contended-looking—this is the more wonderful as she continues to take opium, & could not leave it off without extreme suffering—but it seems to have no other effect on her than to keep her in good health— Nancy<sup>5</sup> was remarkably blooming—her costume is somewhat altered & civilized—I have once or twice seen the nankeens—but white frocks—sashes—& pretty silk kerchiefs are permitted as well as curls—great innovations these.—I heard yesterday from John Hunt that my volume promises to sell well—if I do get & when I get money from it I will send you the things you desire—but I have only £100 p[er] a[nnum] from S[ir] T. S[helley] enough in Italy—but only half enough for England. I shall see Virtue (i.e. Laura—are these synonymous since Petrarch's time?) on Thursday—Mrs. Williams is to go also, who is an extreme favourite of your Mother. Adieu for the present.—

(June 18th) I own when I had finished so far—I began to tremble as to what this little space might contain—nor was I altogether comfortable at the idea of going with your mother & sister to witness Tom's defeat—but on the contrary my dear we beheld his most unequivocal triumph the play was *Richard III*<sup>6</sup>— I do not pretend to say that I like him as I do Kean—but of

<sup>5</sup> Nancy Hunter, daughter of Rowland Hunter and stepsister to Marianne Hunt.

<sup>6</sup> Tom Kent's first London appearance as a leading actor was at Covent Garden on Thursday, June 17, 1824, as *Richard* in *Richard III*. Tom Kent died of cholera in 1849, leaving "a widow and seven children wholly destitute." He had practised latterly "as a surgeon and midwife in a very poor district of Bethnal Green." Thornton Hunt raised a subscription for his widow and family.

course he could not act his best on the first night— The first point of his was— “Was ever woman in such humour won”—and the best thing he said during the whole night was “Richard is himself again.”—After he died, not a word was to be heard—nor could Richmond in any way contrive to give out the play for the next night—in fact one could not hear oneself speak the hubbub was so tremendous. C. Kemble<sup>7</sup> at length made Tom go ~~on~~ to meet their repeated calls for him— There was some opposition but it came principally from the gallery. Poor Tom as you may guess is infinitely delighted to find himself as he says transformed from a poor to a rich man at once—he had refused an offer of £18 p[er] week—& Kemble is now quite cap in hand to him—

When I see him again I shall judge better of his real merits—which one cannot do when he himself was agitated—& one’s attention was of course as much directed towards the audience as to towards [*sic*] him—besides we were (in a private box) a great way from the stage— His voice is the best on the stage—& that is the greatest thing in his favour.—However his acting (as I said) cannot be judged of by last night— Your Mother behaved very well—she took your grandmother with us— The old lady sat as quiet & pleased as possible— Nancy was all anxiety & Virtue sat pale and silent as marble—or her namesake Your mother told me to tell you that she w[oul]d write as soon as she had found her wits—He is to play R. III. again on Monday— I had intended not to go—but if they of H. P.’s insist upon it, I will—though I had rather see him next in a new character—

Write soon my Polly if Hunt is inexorable & will not write again give my love to him, to Occhi turchini<sup>8</sup> & the rest—

Yours aff<sup>ly</sup>

Mary W S.

[P.S.] Direct to me at John Hunts—as I am about to change my lodgings<sup>9</sup>

ADDRESS: Mrs. Leigh Hunt/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ La Toscane/ Florence—Italy. POSTMARKS: (1) ANGLETERRE (2) CHAMBERY (3) 18 JU 18/ 1824 (4) 3/ LUGLIO. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2753); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 139–49 (omits postscript). TEXT: From original letter.

## 210. *To Thomas Jefferson Hogg*

[London] Monday, June 21 [1824]

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

<sup>7</sup> Charles Kemble (1775–1854), manager of Covent Garden Theatre.

<sup>8</sup> Blue Eyes, the baby Vincent.

<sup>9</sup> Mary moved to Kentish Town on June 21. She lived here (at 5 Bartholomew Place) near Jane Williams until the last week of July, 1827.

Mary W. Shelley

JULY 9, 1824 : 213

211. *To Thomas Forbes Kelsall\**

July 3rd [1824]  
5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town.

My dear Sir,

I hope in a few days to obtain Miss Curran's present address, when I will write to her on the subject of giving the portrait to Mr. Beddoes's care. If I should be unable to get it, will you (as soon as you can) let me have Mr. Beddoes's address, as I will write to her through him. It is quite necessary that I should write to her myself.<sup>1</sup>

I am, Yours truly & obliged  
Mary W. Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Miss Kelsall. *The Browning Box*, edited by H. W. Donner (1935), 175: "MS on sheet of notepaper 7¼ x 4½ in. Pages 1, the letter; 3-4, Shelley's *Lines written during the Castlereagh Administration*. Wrapper with address; black seal." PRINTED: *The Browning Box*, edited by H. W. Donner (1935), 18. TEXT: From *ibid*.

212. *To John Hanson*

5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town,  
July 7 [1824]

[*Summary*] Mary requests to be allowed to see Byron's body; she asks when and where Byron is to be buried.<sup>2</sup>

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, addressed. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. SUMMARY: From the original letter.

213. *To John Hanson\**

Kentish Town  
Friday July 9th [1824]

Sir

I am exceedingly obliged to you for your polite attention to my request, and shall avail myself, with many thanks, of the opportunity you afford me for gratifying my wish. I shall be in Great George Street precisely at two o'clock today—

I am Sir  
Your Obt— Sert—  
Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> On June 9, 1824, T. L. Beddoes wrote from Milan to (? Procter or Kelsall): "If you see Mrs. Shelley, ask her to remember me, and tell her that I am as anxious to change countries with her, as she can be. If I could be any use in bringing the portrait, &c. it would be a proud task, but most likely I only flash over Florence: entering in the flood of the stars and departing with their ebb."—*Poems Posthumous and Collected of Thos. Lovall Beddoes*, 1851, I, xxxv. See also Letter 215, note 2.

<sup>2</sup> John Hanson was Byron's solicitor. See Letter 207, note 1.

## 214. To Edward J. Trelawny

July 28th [1824]—Kentish Town.

So, dear Trelawny,<sup>1</sup> you remember still poor Mary Shelley—thank you for your remembrance and a thousand thanks for your kind letter. It is delightful to feel that absence does not diminish your affection, excellent, warm-hearted friend, remnant of our happy days, of my vagabond life in beloved Italy, our companion in prosperity our comforter in sorrow! You will not wonder that the late loss of L[ord] B[yron] makes me cling with greater zeal [to] those dear friends who remain to me— He could be hardly called a friend—but connected with him in a thousand ways, admiring his talents & with all his faults feeling affection for him, it went to my heart when the other day [July 12] the hearse that contained his lifeless form, a form of beauty which in life I often delighted to behold, passed my window going up Highgate Hill on his last journey to the *last* seat of his ancestors. Your account of his last moments was infinitely interesting to me. Going about a fortnight ago to the house where his remains lay, I found there Fletcher & Lega<sup>2</sup> Lega looking a most preposterous rogue— Fletcher I expect to call on me when he returns from Nottingham— From a few words he imprudently let fall, it w[oul]d seem that his Lord spoke of C[laire] in his last moments, and of his wish to do something for her at a time when his mind, vacillating between consciousness & delirium, would not permit him to do any thing. Did F[letcher] mention this to you. It seems that this doughty *Leporello* speaks of his lord to strangers with the highest respect—more than he did a year ago—the best, the most generous, the most wronged of peers—the notion of his leading an irregular life quite a false one. Lady B[yron] sent for F[letcher] he found her in a fit of passionate grief, but perfectly implacable, and as much resolved never to have united herself again to him as she was when she first signed their separation. Mrs. Claremont (the governess) is living with her.

His death as you may guess made a great sensation here, which was not diminished by the destruction of his memoirs, which he wrote & gave to Moore, & which were burned by Mrs. Leigh & Hobhouse.<sup>3</sup> There was not much in them I know, for I read them some years ago at Venice, but the world fancied that it was to have a confession of the hidden feelings of one, concerning whom they were always passionately curious. Moore was by no means pleased he is now writing a life of him himself, but it is conjectured that notwithstanding he had the MS. so long in his possession, that he never found time to read it.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is an answer to Trelawny's letter of April 30, 1824, from Missolonghi (Marshall, II, 115–16). Along with this Trelawny sent a letter addressed to Hobhouse which he had decided not to send; it contained an account of Byron's last days and death. It is printed in *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1006–1009.

<sup>2</sup> Byron's servants.

<sup>3</sup> Byron's *Memoirs* were burned on May 17 at John Murray's in Albemarle Street, in the presence of Murray, Hobhouse, Moore, and others. For a full account of the whole business, see Mayne, *Byron*, 2nd Revised Edition, 448–52.

I breakfasted with him about a week ago, & he is anxious to get materials for his work. I shewed him your letter on the subject of L[ord] B[yron]'s death and he wishes very much to obtain from you any anecdote or account that you w[oul]d like to send. If you know any thing that ought to be known, or feel inclined to detail anything that you may remember worthy of record concerning him perhaps you will communicate with Moore. You have often said that you wished to keep up our friend's name in the world, & if you still entertain the same feeling, no way is more obvious than to assist Moore—who asked me to make you this request— You can write to him through me, or address to Longmans.

But to quit this subject, and to come nearer home—& to return to your welcome letter. In happy hour, it seems, you went to Greece, since you find your element there, & have exchanged inertness for activity— You ask Jane & I to come to you— Would that we could—but Greece is not, at present at least the place for children, & I fear that our little things will forbid such a delightful meeting. Will you not come & see us in our prison here? I sometimes think that you will run over during the coming winter, assure yourself of the existence of your child, remind your Aunts of their affection for you, & embrace the two poor lost girls, who pine for another climate, for lost & absent friends & for the sun of "azure Italy." Nothing distracts our thoughts & talk from the past. We live near each other now & seeing each other almost daily, for ever dwell on one subject. The time of year (fatal July) if possible recalls it more vividly to us. Fatal July I call it—a fated month both for Jane & I—for good and evil fortune. In this month Jane left England with Edward—on this very day ten years ago, I went to France with my Shelley—how young heedless & happy & poor we were then—& now my sleeping boy is all that is left to me of that time—my boy—& a thousand recollections which never sleep.

Here then we are, Jane & I in Kentish Town— After a long duration of cold & rain we have at last fine warm weather—hot, the natives call it—falsely—but, if it w[oul]d last, it is better than *hot* weather for the temperature is quite delightful. The country about here is really pretty; lawny uplands;—wooded parks, green lanes & gentle hills form agreeable & varying combinations. If we had orange sunsets—cloudless noons, fire-flies, large halls &c &c I should not find the scenery amiss—and yet I can attach myself to nothing here—neither among the people—tho' some are good & clever—nor to the places—though they be pretty. Jane is my chosen companion & only friend. I am under a cloud, & cannot form new acquaintances among that class whose manners & mode of life are agreeable to me—& I think myself fortunate in having one or two pleasing acquaintances among literary people—whose society I enjoy without dreaming of friendship. My child too is in excellent health—a fine tall handsome boy—

And then for money & the rest of those necessary annoyances—the means of getting at the necessities of life. Jane's affairs are yet unsettled— She has



found a kind friend in the heir of her deceased guardian—he advises her to remove her money from India. This step requires time—& she cannot leave England till all is settled. My prospects are somewhat brighter than they were. I have little doubt but that in the course of a few months I shall have an independant income of £300 or 400£ per ann. during Sir Tim's life and that with small sacrifice on my part.<sup>4</sup> After his death Shelley's will secures me an income more than sufficient for my simple habits

One of my first wishes in obtaining the independance I mention will be to assist in freeing Claire from her present painful mode of life. She is now at Moscow sufficiently uncomfortable poor girl—unless some change has taken place, I think it probable that she will soon return to England. Her spirits will have been improved by the information I sent her that his family consider S[helley]'s will valid, & that she may rely upon receiving her legacy.<sup>5</sup> We have had a letter from her, but it details no particulars about her situation while she complains of its extreme discomfort and the bad effect a Russian winter had on her.

It is very long since I heard from Hunt. Others however have had letters → I fear that he is far from happy—Marianne's health is still bad & they live out of Florence, without any society. I have not, for some time had any Italian letters—but I have seen your *brother-in-law* young Lavers, from Genoa — Alithea is as beautiful as ever—Mrs. W. is still with W. who has never heard of your exploits. Mrs. Thomas is in London—but I have not seen her lately.<sup>6</sup> I heard from Medwin<sup>7</sup> the other day— He is at . . . [*the remainder of the MS is missing*]

[P.S., at top of p.1] I entreat you to write often—& when you communicate with Mr. Bowring to ask him to inform me of your having written & yr. welfare. As Mr. B. has called on me & offered his services, there is no indecorum in this.<sup>8</sup>

ORIGINAL: Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome; A.L., 4 pp. 4to (incomplete).

PRINTED: Marshall, II, 118–20; Lucy M. Rossetti, *Mrs. Shelley*, 178 (quot., 5 lines, summary of whole letter); *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 86–88n (from Marshall). TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>4</sup> Mary was to be disappointed. She was negotiating through Whitton and Peacock with the Rock Insurance Office to buy "an annuity, during the joint lives of herself and of Sir Timothy Shelley, of £300 per annum, and in consideration thereof to grant a charge on the estates for a gross sum, to be raised and paid thereout in the event of Sir Timothy Shelley's death in the lifetime of either Charles B. Shelley or Percy Florence Shelley, or any male descendants of either of them." (From "Case Tendered by Whitton to the Rock Insurance Office, July 1824,"—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1012.) By January, 1825, however, Mary was receiving £200 per annum from Sir Timothy instead of £100.

<sup>5</sup> Of £12,000.

<sup>6</sup> See Letter 166, note 3.

<sup>7</sup> Medwin's letter (Genoa, July, 1824,—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1017–19) informed Mary that he was preparing his *Conversations of Lord Byron*.

<sup>8</sup> Sir John Bowring (1792–1872) became a warm and useful friend. In February, 1826, Mary gave him the MS of *The Mask of Anarchy* (see Letter 260). Bowring was a remarkable man. He knew about twenty languages, travelled much, wrote many articles and books, and edited many works. In 1825 he became editor of the *Westminster Review*.

215. *To Leigh Hunt*

5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town,

July 29th, 1824

I hope, my dear Hunt, that you will soon receive the volume of Shelley's poems, which I have sent you through Mrs. Mason. It is I believe selling tolerably well— Since writing to Marianne I have removed to this part of the world—but this I may say, is the only change that has taken place in my situation—except indeed that alteration in spirit which is occasioned by a miraculous duration of fine weather: —We (i.e. the English—I used to say *they* ahimel talking of the natives) have not had such a summer, they say, for these five years—manca a shower or two we have not had a mizzle this fortnight— They call it hot—it is not—but it is pleasant weather—a little cloudy or so but so convenient in heat that I echo an Italian image-seller who said to me— *Sarei contento se durasse.*

I had a letter the other day from Trelawny—it was dated Missolonghi, to which place he had come hoping to save or attend on the last moments of L[ord] B[yron], but he came too late. The funeral last week<sup>1</sup> passed my house — What should I have said to a Cassandra who 3 years ago should have prophesied that Jane and I—Edward and Shelley gone, should watch the funeral procession of L. B. up Highgate Hill— All changes of romance or drama lay far behind this. Trelawny is sanguine about the cause and his own personal advancement. He has formed a friendship also for a young man (I suppose a Greek) whom he compares to S[helley] in enthusiasm and talent — He invites Jane and I to Greece and we repeat each other's *vorrei* as we lament over our stupid English life—but it is impossible—quite impossible to go to Greece, I fear ever, and for the present to Italy. Yet I will not be exiled for ever from that dear, dear country—my good compatrioti may rest assured of that.

What news have I? La Novello, dismal beyond measure in her luckless *circumstance*, is also not pleased that Vincenzo looks upon Italy as impossible for this year. Not but I think that she herself is unequal to the journey. We spent the evening at Shacklewell last Monday. Mrs. B. Hunt sang divinely *dove sono*—and the air from *Nina pazza*—La Gliddon was there looking very pretty. Bessy was expected but did not come—I fancy there is some embroglio in St. P[aul]'s Ch[urch]y[ar]d concerning Tom's *cara sposa*. I never saw Bessy look better than when I saw her last, about a fortnight ago—she appeared cheerful and well.

It is about a month since I saw your brother. He talks of bringing out the *Bacchus* in Tuscany—but I have seen no proofs or advertisements. He has some hopes that L. B[yron]'s executors will pay his fine and expences, since

<sup>1</sup> The funeral procession began on July 12, more than two weeks before; the funeral itself was on July 16.

L. B. wrote to D. Kinnaird ordering that this should be done, but D. K. is not executor, nor is it certain how far they are justified in so doing, and I hardly think that Mrs. Leigh will.

I lead a very different life now from that which I did during the winter—something that approaches to my Italian one. Jane and I live near each other, and see each other almost every day—we dwell on the past and dream of future Italy. She, poor girl, has been very ill; but tranquillity and the air here have in a great measure restored her, added to her resolution not to be ill, without which I almost think that she would have been lost. I make hardly any visits except to my father, and endeavour to be as recluse as I can, without giving up the friendship of the very few who are dear to me—Operas and theatres are over for me now in summer time—but while I am near Jane I cannot feel lonely. I hope that my affairs have taken a more prosperous turn, but I am as yet quite in the dark although I indulge a hope that I shall encrease my income this winter—in fact I cannot live in this country for what I have—House rent of itself swallows it nearly up.

I long to hear from you—I fear that you are not well or happy and this long silence on your part seems to arise from that. I wish we could change places—I should not wish for better than the chestnut covered hills and olive groves of Maiano—glowing sunsets, fire flies—the cry of the aziola the language of the [ ] Tuscans—things associated to me with my happiest days [ You] would be pleased with a quiet abode in Kentish Town—a stroll through its green meadows and rambles up its gentle hills—very pretty things no doubt, and I make the best of them, delighted to have escaped dreary London, and resolved to enjoy the summer.

Mr. Beddoes (a very great admirer of our S[helley]) is now in Italy. He is to get the portrait from Miss Curran who I fancy is in Rome.<sup>2</sup> Could not Marianne send one of the profiles already cut to Miss Curran (who I know w[oul]d return it with care) and who by this means would make a better likeness than any that exists at present. I own that my heart is set upon Marianne's doing this for what w[oul]d I not give for a portrait which while he was with me I so often resolved to obtain and was obliged perpetually to disappoint myself. M[arianne] wished for scissors which I had no opportunity of sending—but she has some cut—give my love to her and tell her I throw myself at her feet and implore her to comply with my request. How is she, poor thing? And how is Thorny and dear Henry, whom Percy has not forgotten. Percy is a fine tall boy—he goes to school and learns to read and write although as yet—school being quite a new thing—he has made little progress—the chief good is that he is employed and likes his employment—and takes pleasure in going thither.

<sup>2</sup> T. L. Beddoes did not get the portrait. See Letter 211, note 1, and Letter 141, note 2.

<sup>3</sup> For Hazlitt, see Letter 193, note 6. George Dyer married a Mrs. Mather, already thrice married, at her own suggestion that he needed a wife to keep him clean.

It will give me great pleasure if either you or Marianne would write—I love you both tenderly and am ever

Your affectionate

Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] Hazlitt is married—a nice kind of woman they say. The first Mrs. H[azlitt] paid the new-married couple a wedding visit and was much taken with her successor; this is fact— G. Dyer too is married<sup>3</sup>—a very clean woman, he says—she keeps him clean at least and that is much.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta,/ Firenze./ Florence—Italy.  
ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 134–37 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1013–16. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 216. To Leigh Hunt

Kentish Town, August 22nd, 1824

My dear Hunt,

Although I know that you wish yourself in England, yet it seems to me as if I wrote to Paradise from Purgatory— Our summer is over and rain and perpetual cloud veil this dreary land. I wish you were here since you wish it, yet from all I hear the period does not seem near. Poor dear Marianne! She goes on suffering, and God knows what would become of her in this ungenial climate. Jane and I dream and talk only of our return, and I begin to think that next Autumn this may be possible. A negociation is begun between Sir T. S[helley] and myself by which, on sacrificing a small part of my future expectations on the will, I shall ensure myself a sufficiency, for the present, and not only that, but be able, I hope, to relieve Claire from her disagreeable situation at Moscow. I have been obliged however as an indispensable preliminary, to suppress the Post[humous] Poems<sup>1</sup>— More than 300 copies had been sold so this is the less provoking, and I have been obliged to promise not to bring dear S.'s name before the public again during Sir. T.'s life. There is no great harm in this, since he is above 70, and from choice I should not think of writing memoirs now and the materials for a volume of more works are so scant that I doubted before whether I could publish it— Such is the folly of the world—and so do things seem different from what they are, since from Whitton's account Sir T. writhes under the fame of his incomparable son as if it were a most grievous injury done to him—and so perhaps after all it will prove. All this was pending when I wrote last, but until I was certain I did not think it worth while to mention it. The affair is arranged by Peacock, who though I seldom see him, seems anxious to do me all these kind of services in the best manner that he can.

It is long since I saw your brother nor had he then any news for me— I lead a most quiet life and see hardly any one. Mrs. Novello, Vincent, C[hables]

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 195, note 1.

C[owden] C[larke] and *Werter*<sup>2</sup> went to Boulogne the other day, whence V. escaped and returned to England, and the other three posted on to Paris, earning pleasure hardly I should think, especially as Mrs. N[ovello] appears in a continual fever— The Gliddons are gone to Hastings for a few weeks—Hogg is on the circuit—now that he is rich he is so very poor—so unamiable and so strange that I look forward to his return without any desire of shortening the term of absence— Poor Pierino<sup>3</sup> is now in London— Non fosse male questo paese, he says, se vi vedesse mai il Sole— He is full of Greece to which he is going to return, and gave us an account of our good friend T[relawny] which shewed that he is not at all changed. T. had made a hero of the Greek Chief Ulysses and declares that there is a great cavern in Attica<sup>4</sup> which he and Ulysses have provisioned for 7 years and to which if the cause fails he and this Chieftain are to retire—but if the cause is triumphant he is to build a city in the Negropont, colonize it and Jane and I are to go out to be Queens and Chieftainesses of the Island. When T. first came to Athens—he took to a Turkish life bought 12 or fifteen women—*brutti mostri*—Pierino says—one a Moor, of all things—and there he lay on his sofa, smoking, these gentle creatures about him,—till he got heartily sick of idleness shut them up in his *haram* and joined and combated with Ulysses. He has quarrelled very violently with Mavrocordato, but I easily divine how all this is— Poor Mavrocordato, beset by covetous Suliotes, disliked by the chieftains of the Morea—caballed against by the strangers—poor, while every other chief is getting rich, is drinking deep of the bitter cup of calumny and disappointment.

But to quite Greece and return to England. The Opera House is closed—before it shut I heard *Pasta*<sup>5</sup> and never was more affected by any scenic representation than by her acting of Romeo— She joins intellectual beauty, grace, perfect tragic action to a fine voice and a sentiment in singing I never saw equalled. When she was *Giulietta* in the tomb—when she takes poison, when *Giulietta* awakes and her joy at meeting is changed to the throes of death, the whole theatre was in one transport of emotion— The novelty now is the *Der Freishutz* of Weber—performing at the Lyceum and the music is wild but often beautiful—when the magic bullets are cast they fill the stage with all sorts of horrors—owls flapping their wings—toads [jump]ing about—fiery serpents darting [their tongues]—ghostly hunters in the clouds, while every now and then [ ] of a stream of wild harmony comes a crashing discord—all forms I assure you a very fine scene, while every part of the house except the stage is enveloped in darkness.

<sup>2</sup> Edward Holmes. See Letter 196.

<sup>3</sup> Count Pietro Gamba, brother of the Countess Guiccioli. He accompanied Byron to Greece, and died at Metana, in Greece, in 1827.

<sup>4</sup> Trelawny had sent Mary "A Description of the Cavern Fortress of Mount Parnassus" with the note: "Will you make an article of this, as Leigh Hunt calls it, and request his brother to publish it in the *Examiner*, which will very much oblige me."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1027–31. See also Trelawny's *Records*, 258–63.

<sup>5</sup> Giuditta Pasta (1798–1865).

One of my principal reasons for writing just now is that I have just heard Miss Curran's address (64, via Sistina, Rome<sup>6</sup>) and I am anxious that Marianne should (if she will be so very good) send one of the profiles already cut, to her, of Shelley, since I think that by the help of that Miss C[urran] will be able to correct her portrait of S[helley] and make for us, what we so much desire, a good likeness— I am convinced that Miss C. will return the profile immediately that she has done with it—so that you will not sacrifice it, though you may be the means of our obtaining a good likeness.

I will write soon to Marianne—in the mean time I wish she would write to me since I long to hear from her, and should be very glad whenever you will be kind enough to assure me of the continuance of your friendship although I fear it is gone to the tomb of the Capulets—but I do not deserve this catastrophe— Give my love to your children—Occhi Turchini among the rest—and believe me ever, my dear Hunt

Your faithful friend,  
Mary W. Shelley

[P.S.] Direct to me thro' yr. brother.

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze, Italie./ Florence—Italy.  
ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 137–40 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1019–22; Marshall, II, 120–22 (incomplete); *Letters*, 149–52 (like Marshall). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 217. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Kentish Town, August 30 [1824]<sup>1</sup>

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

## 218. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

Kentish Town, Oct. 3 [1824]<sup>2</sup>

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

## 219. To Marianne Hunt

Kentish Town,  
Oct. 10th [1824]

My dearest Marianne,

My interest in you and your dear circle has been excited in the most lively and painful way by the news I have had of you through Bessy. One's first thought is can one not in any way aid these beloved exiles? and then I shrink into myself in despair at my nothingness. If it were not for your's and Hunt's

<sup>6</sup> This was also Miss Curran's address in 1819 when the Shelleys saw her daily. On May 7 the Shelleys moved near her, at 65 Via Sistina.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is an answer to Hogg's letter of August 22, 1824, which is printed in *Shelley and Mary* (IV, 1022–25), as is also Hogg's reply of September 26 to the present letter (IV, 1034–36).

<sup>2</sup> Hogg replied to this letter on October 16 (*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1048–50).

health, I am convinced that Novello's active friendship would dissipate other difficulties and restore you to the England you love. In the meantime are there not resources by which you might be rendered more comfortable where you are. J. H[unt] says that Colburn wishes H[unt] to contribute to the N[ew] Monthly, if this is true, he would pay liberally and H. need not feel delicacy towards his brother since the latter has no violent wish that the L[iterary] E[xaminer]'s sh[oul]d be continued. From what J. H[unt] said perhaps there is a negotiation with Colb[ur]n already on foot—if not if I can thro' H[orace] Smith (who is now in E[ngland] and expected dayly in London)<sup>1</sup> or in my own person contribute to such an arrangement I pray you employ me. I am anxious beyond measure to hear from you—from you, my Polly, in particular—since you will send me the most vivid picture of what is passing near. Write if you love me—

I write to you on the most dismal of all days a rainy Sunday, when dreary church-going faces look still more drearily from under dripping umbrellas, and the poor plebian dame looks reproachfully at her splashed white stockings—not her gown, that has warily been held high up and the to-be-concealed petticoat has borne all the ill usage of the mud. Dismal though it is, dismal tho' I am, I do not wish to write a discontented letter but in a few words to describe things as they are with me—a weekly visit to the Strand a monthly visit to Shacklewell (when we are sure to be caught in the rain) forms my catalogue of visits— I have no visitors—if it were not for Jane I should be quite alone—the eternal rain imprisons one in one's little room and one's spirits flag without one exhilarating circumstance. In some things, however, I am better off than last year for I do not doubt but that in the course of a few months I shall have an independance, and I no longer balance as I did last winter, between Italy and England. My father wished me to stay, and old as he is, and wishing as one does to be of some use somewhere I thought that I would make the trial and stay if I could. But the joke is become too serious. I look forward to the coming winter with horror, but *it shall be* the last. I have not yet made up my mind to the where in Italy, I shall if possible immediately on arriving push on to Rome. Then we shall see. I read, study and write, sometimes that takes me out of myself—but to live for no one, to be necessary to none, to know that—"Where is now my hope? for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust."<sup>2</sup>—But change of scene and the sun of Italy will restore my energy, the very thought of it smooths my brow. Perhaps never content with the climate, I shall seek the heats of Naples, if they do not hurt my darling Percy.

And now what news? Mrs. N[ovello] is [in] all the horror of the month expectant—hardly knowing whether she will not leave her home and comforts to spend it in town on account of the Doctor. Poor Statia, feels each day

<sup>1</sup> Horace Smith settled at Brighton.

<sup>2</sup> Job, 17:15-16.

more the falling off and separation that Shacklewell has caused—to poor people it is no joke to pay a visit with the fear of spending 10 shillings before they can get back—and then Shacklewell is so dreary—the road to it so hateful and there you sit watching the clouds and clock—fearful of rain, fearful of being too late— We had a fright the other day fearing that Miss L[amb] was going to be taken ill—but she is now quite well, so she will escape this year. I was to have dined there today had it not been for the rain— She always asks most affectionately after you. Procter is married, he married A. Skepper last Thursday<sup>3</sup>—of course I shall never see him again. When you spoke of him and H[unt] offered me an introduction to him I declined it knowing that since he was connected with Mrs. M. all would happen—as it has happened; since introducing himself to me I have seen him, i.e. that his gentleness, poetical taste and conversation would interest and please me, and then that he w[oul]d disappear from my horizon leaving regret behind. He called on me several times last winter and sat several hours, I was very much pleased with him—and I shall never see him again, which pains me. The same paper that announced his marriage gave out the death of Ld. C. Murray— I liked his letter to H. I liked the feeling and the conduct of the man, and he is gone. Pierino Gamba is in town—I have seen him often and talked over old times— Hogg is going the circuit, being more queer, stingy and supercilious than ever. Peacock transacts my business with Sir T. S.'s solicitor else I never see him. Colson went to France last spring and has not yet recovered from the enthusiasm inspired by the French women and Notre Dame. Hazlitt is abroad—he will be in Italy in the winter. He wrote an article in the E[dinburgh] R[evue]<sup>4</sup> on the vol[ume] of Poems which I published— I do not know whether he meant it to be favourable or not—I did not like it at all—but when I saw him I could not be angry— I never was so shocked in my life— gaunt and thin, his hair scattered, his cheek bones projecting—but for his voice and smile I sh[oul]d not have known him—his smile brought tears into my eyes, it was like a sun beam illuminating the most melancholy of ruins— lightning that assured you in a dark night of the identity of a friend's ruined and deserted abode.—Well what more gossip can I send?—there is a naughty story that Eros (*Eros*, Polly!) was discovered by his most sacred M—y with Lady C—ngh—m, that the K. fainted and Eros was obliged to turn from love making to the art of medicine— Of course it is not true—of course—but I say nothing—but this I will say—Oh love! it is!— Pray, how is Anteros—

Have you, my Polly, sent a profile to Miss C[urran] in Rome— Now pray do—and pray write—do, my dear girl—next year by this time I shall perhaps be on my road to you—it will go hard but that I contrive to spend a week (that is if *you* wish it) at F[lorence] on my way to the Eternal City.

<sup>3</sup> On October 7 Procter married Anne Skepper, stepdaughter of Basil Montagu.

<sup>4</sup> Hazlitt's review of the *Posthumous Poems* was in the number for July, 1824.



God send that this prove not an airy Castle—but I own that I put faith in my having money before that—and I know that I could not if I would endure the torture of my English life longer than is also absolutely necessary. By the bye, I hear that you are keeping your promise to Trelawny—and that in due time he will be blessed with a name-sake— How is Occhi Turchini—Thornton the Reformer—Johnny—the—what Johnny?—the good boy—hay!—Mary the merry, Irving the Sober, Percy the Martyr and dear Sylvan the good?—

Percy is quite well, tell his friend—he goes to school and learns to read and write—being very handy with his hands—perhaps having a pure anticipated cognition of the art of painting in his long fingers. Mrs. W[illiam]'s little girl, who calls herself Dina,<sup>5</sup> is his wife. Poor C[laire] is at Moscow at least she will be independant one day—and if I am so soon her situation will quickly be ammeliorated— Do you know among other chances I shall probably visit Dublin next summer.

Have you heard of Medwin's book<sup>6</sup>—notes on conversations that he had at Pisa with L[ord] B[yron] (when tipsy) every one is to be in it every one will be angry. He wanted me to have a hand in it but I declined—years ago "When a man died the worms ate him"—now a new set of worms feed on the carcase of the scandal that he leaves behind him and grow fat upon the world's love of tittle tattle— I will not be numbered among them.

Have you received the Vol. of Poems. Give my love to Very—and so dear Very Patient— Adieu.

Yours affly.

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Mrs. Leigh Hunt,/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze./ Florence—Italy. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Relics of Shelley*, edited by Garnett, 140–44 (incomplete); *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1040–45; Marshall, II, 125–27 (incomplete); *Letters*, 152–56 (like Marshall). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 220. To Thomas Jefferson Hogg

[? November, 1824]

[Original letter owned by Captain R. J. J. Hogg. See Letters 6–16.]

## 221. To Mrs. Vincent Novello\*

Kentish Town

Dec. 27 [1824]

According to your kind intimation, Carissima Mia—fair Jane & myself have been expecting the Cavalieri—the devil a one (if I may be permitted the

<sup>5</sup> Her real name was Rosalind, but she was always called Dina.

<sup>6</sup> *Conversations of Lord Byron*: Noted during a Residence with his Lordship at Pisa in the years 1821 and 1822 (London, 1824). A second edition appeared in 1824, and it was printed in Paris and in New York in the same year. Another edition was published in 1830. In July Medwin had written from Genoa: "I shall certainly not publish the work till you have seen it, and would give the world to consult you in person about the whole; you might be of the greatest possible use to me, and prevent many errors from creeping in. . . . What do you advise? Let me have your full opinion, for I mean to be guided by it."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1018.

expression) has yet appeared— In the name of the 7 planets & all Mr. Clarke's stars what can they be about?—I trust in the ruler of the same that it is not occasioned by any indisposition of Vincenzo's— As for a visit to Shacklewell while this blessed climate affords only the varieties of rain & wind (snow & ice are to come) an impassable Jordan separates us—

Dear Mary Sabilla—if the [O. G. or V. G.] is very good & the Lambs forbid us not Jane & I intend to be at Colebrook Cottage on Sunday— Shall we meet there

In the meantime I beg to say that you receders are very naughty & that Shacklewell was certainly in Shakespeare's head when he talked of the bourne from which no travellers return—there have been more ghosts to give us news of the land he is commonly supposed to mean than visitors from your green—

How is Charles Arthur & all the little folks & womanly Victoria whom I do not & must not include in the list— Percy & Mrs. W[illiams]'s babes are well—

Twenty kisses such as woman may give to woman on your dear cheek—as for the Cavalieri they may think themselves happy if they obtain our little fingers for the purpose of saluting them.

Thine

Mary W S.

[P.S.] Is Werter making love to Miss Foote?<sup>1</sup> Is Charles married— consequent [*sic*] no more to be heard of? Is Vincenzo the most faithless of men? —(N.B. V. is not the last but the climax!)

ADDRESS: Mrs. Vincent Novello/ Shacklewell Green. POSTMARK: 12.NOON.12/ DE.28/ 1824. ORIGINAL: British Museum (Add. MSS. 11,730, ff.181–82); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 222. To Miss Amelia Curran

5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town,  
Janry. 2nd, 1825.

My dear Miss Curran,

A thousand thanks for all the kindness expressed in your letter of October 15th— You are now probably settled in Rome. Pisa is a terrible residence for the summer—but without going as far as the Baths of Lucca—or encountering the English, who are particularly odious in such a confined spot—you would have found a cool retreat beneath the Pisan Hills whither we used to fare *villeggiatura* in summer time—and where I passed the happiest years of my life. I envy your Roman abode—every sacrifice would appear to me small to see again that adored place—I have now better prospects than I had—or rather a better reality—for my prospects are sufficiently misty. I receive now

<sup>1</sup> Edward Holmes and Maria Foote, the actress.

£200 a year from my father-in-law—but this in so strange and embarrassed a manner that as yet I hardly know what to make of it. I do not believe however that he would object to my going abroad—as I dare say he considers that the first step towards Kingdom Come, whither doubtless he prays that an interloper like I may be speedily removed. I talk therefore of going next autumn—and shall be grateful to any power divine or human that assists me to leave this desert country— Mine I cannot call it—it is too unkind to me.

What you say of my Shelley's picture is beyond words interesting to me. How good you are! Send it I pray you—for perhaps I cannot come and at least it would be a blessing to receive it a few months earlier. I am afraid you can do nothing about the Cameo— As you say it were worth nothing unless like—but I fancied that it might be accomplished under your directions— Would it be asking you too much to lend me the copy you took of my darling William's portrait—since mine is somewhat injured but from both together I could get a nice copy made.<sup>1</sup>

You may imagine that I see few people so far from the centre of bustling London—but in truth I found that even in town, poor un-dinner-giving as I was, I could not dream of society—it was a great confinement for Percy—and I could not write in the midst of smoke—noise and streets— I live here very quietly going once a week to the Strand. My chief dependance for society is in Mrs. Williams, who lives at no great distance— As to theatres &c. how can a "lone woman" think of such things— No—the pleasures and luxuries of life await me in divine Italy—but here privation solitude and desertion are my portion. What a change for me—but I must not think of that— I contrive to live on as I am—but to recur to the past and compare it with the present is to deluge me in grief and tears.

My boy is well—a fine tall fellow and as good as I can possibly expect—he is improved in looks since he was here. C[laire] is in Moscow still—not very pleasantly situated—but she is in a situation, and being now well in health waits with more patience for better times. The G[odwin]s go on as usual— My father tho' harassed, is in good health, and is employed on the 2nd Vol. of the Commonwealth.

The weather here is astonishingly mild but the rain continual half England is under water and the damage done at Sea Ports from storms incalculable — In Rome doubtless it has been different—Rome, dear name; I cannot tell why but to me there is something enchanting in that spot. I have another friend there; the Countess Guiccioli—now unhappy and mournful from the death of Lord B. Poor girl—I sincerely pity her, for she truly loved him, and I cannot think that she can endure an Italian after him. You have there also a Mr. Taaffe—a countryman of yours, who translates Dante and rides fine horses who perpetually throw him. He knew us all very well.

<sup>1</sup> See Miss Curran's reply from Rome on April 19, 1825, in Letter 141, note 2. The picture finally got into Mary's hands on September 17.

The English have had many a dose of scandal—first poor dear L. B. [ ] whom, now gone, many a poor devil of an author sups fearless [of pun]ishment—then Mr. Fauntleroy<sup>2</sup>—then Miss Foote<sup>3</sup> [*MS torn*] there are [ ] dying away—the fame of Mr. F. indeed has not survived [ ] that of L. B[yron] bursts forth every now and then afresh—while Miss [Foote] smokes most dismally still—then we have had our quantum of fires and misery—and the poor exiled Italians and Spaniards have added famine to the list of evils, a subscription highly honourable to the poor and middling classes who subscribed their mite, has relieved them.

Will you write soon— How much delight I anticipate this spring on the arrival of the picture— In all thankfulness

Faithfully yours,

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] If you see much of Severn, and if you do not think the request indiscreet—would you ask him to give me (or sell me) a copy of a portrait he made of my friend Trelawny.<sup>4</sup>

You will not paint again! How I mourn over this sacrifice of your talents, yet I do not wonder, with your health and nerves occupation must be tedious to you.

I direct to you as before—for that letter reached you—you have sent me no other address—and I do not think that you are in the habit of sending to the Post Office.

Is there any truth in the horrible story of the murder of a Mr. and Mrs. Hunt at Paestum?

ADDRESS: Miss Curran/ All Arco Della Regina/ Via Sistina/ Roma./ Rome—  
Italia. [POSTMARK]: Impostata il 7 Gennaio. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls.  
PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1054–56; Marshall, II, 130–32; *Romance*, 27  
(quot., 9 lines). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

<sup>2</sup> The *Dictionary of National Biography* gives a rather detailed account of the arrest, trial, and execution of Henry Fauntleroy (1785–1824), banker, for forging documents and fraudulently disposing of stocks left in trust with the bank, in which he was a partner, to the sum of about £70,000. He was arrested on September 11, tried on October 30, and executed on November 30, 1824. The case created a sensation, and many efforts were made by sympathetic people to save his life. Popular speculation about what he did with so much money created legends of mistresses and riotous living.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Foote, Countess of Harrington (1797?–1867), actress. She began acting at Covent Garden on May 26, 1814, and acted there every season until 1826, when she went to Drury Lane Theatre. She was not a great actress, but was popular because she was pretty and accommodating. She was involved in several scandals: (1) She had a couple of children by Colonel Berkeley (1815+), who promised marriage but did not hold to his promise. (2) "Pea Green" Haynes proposed and was accepted. He was sued for breach of promise and lost £300 damages. (3) At Bath, on January 13 and 14, 1825, Miss Foote was subject to ill-treatment by part of the audience because of some recent scandal—for which conduct Genest reproves the audience. Miss Foote married Charles Stanhope, fourth Earl of Harrington on April 7, 1831, a short time after retiring from the stage.

<sup>4</sup> Miss Curran wrote (see note 1): "I have seen Severn, who is sending you, in a few days, the portrait you wished for."

## 223. To Louisa Holcroft\*

5 Bartholomew Place, Kentish Town  
Janry 6th [1825]

My dear Louisa

Do not be angry that I have not written to you during all this time;—or do be angry if that is a sign that you have not forgotten me—but suffer your indignation to be mollified by this letter. To tell you the truth I like letter writing when I am happy but when I am out of spirits it becomes a task— A pen in hand my thoughts flow fast, but then they come from the overflowing of my heart & if that be sad, why make sad a friend by useless complaints—true I cannot forget past happiness—or become reconciled to my present situation—but why talk to you, dear girl, of these things, who young as you are have, I fear cares of your own?

Behold me even as you left me, only more deserted & solitary—behold me in my little room beside my fire—with no change or hope—Well did your mother prophecy that I should find England intolerable yet she would hardly believe how totally I am exiled here from everything that can add a charm to life— And the moment of my departure is yet cruelly uncertain— Shall I ever again leave these clouds?—shall I in very truth feel the sun of Italy—view its beloved hills—wander in its vineyards—again visit those spots sacred to me by every happy tie?—

God of the best the brightest  
The dearest spot on earth,  
Where thou hast loved to scatter  
Thy gifts of joy & mirth  
See now in gloom I wander,  
How mournfully I rove:  
Alas! Alas! this England  
I can no longer love—

You of course see the papers & news therefore would be *de trop*— I run over the list of our common friends—but all is as usual— The Lambs are well & dear Miss L[amb] has escaped this year without one of her painful visitations. Poole—you have [heard] of his adventure. Elliston refused him a Free Admission to D[rury] L[ane]. Poole wrote & Elliston did not reply. So Poole went to the theatre & sent in his card— E[lliston] was in the Green Room surrounded by the actors— Whoever, he cried, wishes to see a man kicked follow me! The scene that ensued you may easily imagine—& Poole brought Elliston before a magistrate where the “King of his people” sat in infinite majesty silent & dignified— The complaint made the magistrate asked him what he had to say— Nothing— Your bail sir?— Without a

word he pointed to two men attending him & departed with the same ineffable speechlessness.<sup>1</sup>

I have been very sorry to hear from your brother Tom that Ell[en] has been ill. As she has been & I fancy still remains at her aunt Mrs. Dowling's I have been unable to see her, since I am not acquainted with Mrs. Dowling—but I wish you would request her to do me the favour to call on me—I am but a dull person but she would see her old friend Percy—and the change might amuse her.

Do you ever see W[ashington] Irvin[g]<sup>2</sup>—he talks of visiting England this Autumn—but he has not unfortunately fulfilled his purpose—Remember me to him & tell him I claim his promised visit when he does come—Moore<sup>3</sup> has been in town—I have not seen him & he has postponed I believe his life of poor dear L[ord] B[yron] for the present—Newton<sup>4</sup> the painter passed five weeks at Sir W[alter] S[cott]'s country seat Abbotsford & is painting as my father tells me, a very clever picture of an hypocondriacal [? family].

It will give me great pleasure to hear from you, my dear Louisa—and I trust that you will write before long. I hope your mother is well—How is Mr. Kenny—pray present my best regards to them both—and tell me how all your dear children are. Percy is well—grown tall & taller & thrives in this odious swamp as well as if he were a native of it. I write & seal my letter without communicating with Mrs. Godwin, or I am sure she would send you a thousand kind messages—she often talks of you with affectionate interest—She is not quite so well now as when you saw her—M[*MS torn*] & is very busy writing. [ ] what has become of Mrs. Morris's pink silk go[wn] [ ] chains? That best tempered & best dressed of women [ ] intreat you to remember with some pleasure our walks [and] operatic excursions—the divine Pasta—the loaches that Tom brought us—Miss Dabbitt—and the dinner I made you order for Mr. Kenny—What was it?—mutton broth & [a] great piece of boiled bacon I think—perhaps his memory will serve better than mine—and then the piece of cold: warm veal brought in as a

<sup>1</sup> Robert William Elliston (1774–1831) and John Poole had further trouble on July 21, 1826, when Elliston, again as aggressor, committed an outrage upon Poole at Vauxhall Gardens. This time Elliston gave Poole a signed apology, with permission to publish it, in order to prevent prosecution.

<sup>2</sup> This is the first reference in Mary's correspondence to Washington Irving. See Appendix II.

<sup>3</sup> Mary's intimacy with Thomas Moore began soon after Byron's death, when Moore was contemplating writing Byron's biography and sought Mary for assistance. They were probably introduced by Kenney. Moore's *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence*, ed. by Lord John Russell, relates only six definite meetings of these two (July 17, 1824; June 21, 25, July 1, 1827; October 4, 7, 1829); but from these it is quite clear that they met many times and exchanged many letters. I have been told that Lord Abinger has nearly a hundred of Moore's letters to Mary. These letters would doubtless show how much Moore's *Life of Byron* owes to Mary. On June 21, 1827, Moore wrote in his journal: "Went to Kentish Town to breakfast with Mrs. Shelley. Mrs. S. disposed to give me every assistance in my 'Life of Byron'; promised to write out her recollections of the *Memoirs*, which she had read (at least the first part) before he gave them to me; fixed to meet her next Monday at the Exhibition."

<sup>4</sup> Gilbert Stuart Newton (1794–1835), painter and Royal Academician; painted portraits of Washington Irving (1824), Scott, Moore, and others.

subsidiary—but then the strawberries & milk made us forget all our cares—  
Do you think that Mr. Nathan's pantaloons are still in existence?

Your friend in truest truth

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] What of my pictures?—my little boys [William's] & L.B. I should like sent as soon as you can find an opportunity.—

I direct as Tom<sup>5</sup> told me he did— I hope that you will get the letter & that it will not by some mischance fall into the hands of any "Beautiful Maid at the Foot of the Hill"—belonging to this Particular Society—or what will she say to Mr. Nathan's Pantaloons?—

ADDRESS: À Mademoiselle/ Mlle. Louise Holcroft/ Ala Societè Particuliere/ near Paris—à Versailles. POSTMARK: Jan. 7, 1825. ORIGINAL: Pierpont Morgan Library; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 224. To Edward John Trelawny

5 Bartholomew Place Kentish Town

Feb. 22 [1825].

My dear Trelawny

I hear at last that Mr. Hodges has letters for me, and that prevents a thousand things I was about to say concerning the pain your very long silence has occasioned me. Consider, dear Friend, that your last was in date April, so that nearly a year has gone by, & not only I did not hear *from* you, but until the arrival of Mr. Hodges, many months had elapsed since I had heard *of* you. Sometimes I flattered myself that the foundations of my little habitation would have have [been] shaken by a "Ship Shelley ahoy"—that even Jane, distant a mile, would have heard. That dear hope lost, I feared a thousand things—Hamilton's Browne's illness—the death of many English, the return of every other from Greece filled me with gloomy apprehensions.

But you live,—what kind of life—your letters will I trust inform me—What possible kind of life in a cavern surrounded by precipices, inaccessible! All this will satisfy your craving imagination; the friendship you have for Odysseus does that satisfy your warm heart?—Your Seraglio left behind at Athens—I gather from your last letter & other intelligence, that you think of marrying the sister of your favourite Chief—& thus will renounce England—& worse—the English for ever. And yet—no! You love some of us, I am sure too much to forget us—even if you neglect us for a while—but truly I long for your letters which will tell me all. And remember, dear Friend, it is about yourself that I am anxious—of Greece I read in the papers— I see many informants—but I can learn your actions, hopes, & above all valuable to me, the continuance of your affection for me, from your letters only.

I have nothing new to tell you. I live in the same place, vegetate in the

<sup>5</sup> Tom Holcroft, Louisa's brother.

same way— My boy grows taller, I grow older—so that in my melancholy prognostications—I often fancy, so fast does the year change its cypher, that I shall be “a toothless old hag” before we meet again. My affairs are still in close keeping of Sir Timothy’s Solicitor, who just affords me wherewithal to live—with promises of better things soon. When the first use to which I shall put my encrease of cash will be to leave this England, where I find neither comfort for past misfortunes or hope of happier days.

I have not heard from Claire since I dispatched her letter to you. Perhaps your packet may contain one to her. I quite forget whether I told you the latest news of Jane—that Ned’s mother-in-law<sup>1</sup> now makes her an allowance—and makes it without restriction or pretention. This dear girl’s health is much better than it was last year— We are much together talking of the past—or future (for the present is nought) & we mingle your name in our dreams of both.

The name of L[ord] B[yron] which stood its ground for a very long time in this country is now dying away. Medwin’s book made a great sensation. He is lately married to a Swedish lady of rank—a baroness by right of birth—a countess by the rank of her late husband—with a good fortune, he says, pretty, & thirty years of age.<sup>2</sup> However the two latter circumstances may be apocryphal—it is certain that she has some money & consequently that he has made a good thing of it. Moreover I received a letter from him the other day whose seal bears arms topped by a coronet & supported by griffins with the motto (it might do for Gabe<sup>3</sup>) *Nous ne changeons jamais*—happy Medwin! he says that he & his bride think of settling at Florence (they are now at Vevai) & that the last two months have been the happiest of his life. His letter is principally taken up with excuses for having (against my earnest desire) published a very blundering & disagreeable memoir of our Shelley in his Conversations [of Lord Byron]<sup>4</sup>—& last [but] not least he reports having sold the boat for 20 napoleons—deducts 5 for expences & sends £12 as being the whole of the residue to Jane<sup>5</sup>—Magnificent

Feb. 27th

I now close my letter; I have not yet received yours.—

Last night Jane & I went with Gamba & my father to see Kean in Othello. This play, as you may guess, reminded us of you— Do you remember when delivering the killing scen[e] you awoke Jane as Othello awakens Desdemona,

<sup>1</sup> This, Mary’s second reference to Williams’s mother-in-law, would indicate that Williams as well as Jane had been married before they were united. The *New English Dictionary* shows, however, that mother-in-law might then have meant stepmother.

<sup>2</sup> He married Anne, Baroness Hamilton of Sweden, who by her first marriage was Countess of Stainfort or Starnford. She was born on February 26, 1788, and died at Sienna on June 28, 1868. She and Medwin (who later deserted her) had two daughters. (See *D.N.B.*)

<sup>3</sup> Probably Gabrielle, Mrs. Wright, who lived in Genoa and was in love with Trelawny.

<sup>4</sup> Medwin’s first memoir of Shelley was in a long footnote in his *Conversations of Lord Byron* (A New Edition, 1824, 306–17). It was, of course, filled with inaccuracies.

<sup>5</sup> When he left Geneva in 1820, Williams owned a horse and a boat. The horse Medwin disposed of for Jane shortly after Williams’s death in 1822.



from [her] sleep on the sofa? Kean, abominably supported, acted divinely—put as he is upon his mettle by the recent events & a full house & applause—which he deserved—his farewell is the most pathetic piece of acting to be imagined. Yet my dear Friend I wish we had seen it represented, as was talked of at Pisa—Iago w[oul]d never have found a better representative than [than] that strange & wondrous creature, whom one regrets dayly more—for who here can equal him?

Adieu, dear Trelawny—take care of yourself & come & visit us as soon as you can escape from the sorceries of Ulysses

In all truth

Ys. Affectionately

M W S—

[MS Comment added by Trelawny in the left-hand margin of page 5]  
At Pisa 1822 Lord Byron talked vehemently of our getting up a play in his Great Hall at the Lanfranchi; it was to be Othello he cast the Characters thus. Byron Iago—Tre[lawny] Othello. Williams Cassio. Medwin Roderigo Mrs. Shelley Desdemona Mrs. Williams Emilia Who is to be our audience I asked—all Pisa he rejoined—he recited a great Portion of his part with great gusto it exactly suited him—he looked it to[o].

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny Esq./ &c &c &c/ Honoured by Count Gamba. ORIGINAL: Keats Shelley Memorial, Rome; A.L.S., 5 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: Marshall, II, 139–40 (dated 1826); *Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, edited by Forman, 90–91n (from Marshall; both incomplete). TEXT: From original letter.

## 225. To Leigh Hunt

5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town.  
April 8th [1825]

My dear Hunt,

I have just finished reading your Article upon Shelley.<sup>1</sup> It is with great diffidence that I write to thank you for it—because perceiving plainly that you think that I have forfeited all claim on your affection, you may deem my thanks an impertinent intrusion. But from my heart I thank you— You may imagine that it has moved me deeply— Of course this very article shews how entirely you have cast me out from any corner in your affections—and from various causes, none dishonourable to me, being excluded from society,

<sup>1</sup> Hunt's essay on Shelley, begun with the intention of printing it in the *Posthumous Poems* (June, 1824), was sent by Hunt to *The Westminster Review*, and was read by John Bowring, Mary, and Peacock. But it was not published, mainly because Peacock objected. He had arranged Mary's affairs with Sir Timothy in 1824, when it was agreed not only that the *Posthumous Poems* should be suppressed but that any further publication bringing Shelley's name forward should be prevented so far as Peacock had any influence. Peacock now wished to save himself and Mary trouble. Hunt finally published his essay in 1828 in his *Lord Byron and Some of His Contemporaries*. He did not alter the statement that Shelley and Harriet separated by mutual consent, or omit the sentence about Williams's ashes being brought to England. His failure to make the changes is probably an oversight. But he did omit all references to Claire. See Letters 257 and 346.

now more entirely than I ever was—I cannot help wishing that I could have secured your good will and kindness which I prize and have ever prized—But you have a feeling, I had almost said a prejudice, against me—which makes you construe foreign matter into detraction against me (I allude to the, to me, deeply afflicting idea you got upon some vague expression communicated to you by your brother) and insensible to any circumstances that might be pleaded for me. But I will not dwell on this—the sun shines and I am striving so hard for a continuation of the gleams of pleasure that visit my intolerable state of regret for the loss of beloved companionship, during cloudless days that I will dash away the springing tears—and make one or two necessary observations on your article.

I have often heard our Shelley relate the story of stabbing an Upper Boy with a fork—but never as you relate it— He always described it in my hearing as being an almost involuntary act, done on the spur of anguish, and that he made the stab as the boy was going out of the room— Shelley did not allow Harriet half his income—she received £200 a year. Mr. Westbrook had always made his daughter an allowance even while she lived with Shelley—which of course was continued to her after their separation.

I think if I were near you I could readily persuade you to omit all allusion to Claire. After the death of L. B[yron] in the thick of memoirs, scandal, and turning up old stories she has never even been alluded to, at least in any work I have seen. You mention (having been obliged to return your MS. to Mr. Bowring, I quote from memory) an Article in Blackwood—but I hardly think that this is of date subsequent to our miserable loss— In fact poor Claire has been buried in entire oblivion and to bring her from this even for the sake of defending her would I am sure pain her greatly and do her mischief. Would you permit this part to be erased?—I have without waiting to ask your leave, requested Mr. Bowring to leave out your mention that the remains of dearest Edward were brought to England. Jane still possesses this treasure—and has once or twice been asked by his Mother-in-law about it— Once an urn was sent— Consequently she is very anxious that her secret should be kept and has allowed it to be believed that the ashes were deposited with Shelley's at Rome.

Such, my dear Hunt, are all the alterations that I have to suggest and I lose no time in communicating them to you— They are too trivial for me to apologize for the liberty—and I hope that you will agree with me in what I say about Claire— Allegra no more—she at present absent and forgotten—on Sir tim's death she will come in for a legacy which may enable her to enter into society, perhaps to marry, if she wishes it—if the past be not [? revived. (*MS torn*) I forget] whether such things are recorded by Galignani—or if recorded how far it is likely that you would have noticed it.—My father's complicated annoyances, brought to their height by the failure of a very promising speculation, and the loss of an impossible-to-be-lost lawsuit, have ended

in a bankruptcy—the various acts of which drama are now in progress. That over, nothing will be left him but his pen and me— He is so full of his Commonwealth that in the midst of every anxiety he writes every day now and in a month or two will have completed the second volume.—And I am employed in raising money necessary for my maintainance and of which he must participate— This will drain me pretty dry for the present—but (as the old women say) if I live, I shall have more than enough for him and me and recur at least to some part of my ancient style of life and feel of some value to others— Do not however mistake my phraseology—I shall not live with my father, but return to Italy—and economize the moment God and Mr. Whitton will permit— My Percy is quite well—and has exchanged his constant winter occupation of drawing for playing in the fields (which are now useful as well as ornamental) flying kites—gardening and—I bask in the sun on the grass reading Virgil, that is, my beloved Georgics and Ld. Shaftesbury's Characteristics. I begin to live again, and as the Maids of Greece sang joyous hymns on the revival of Adonis, does my spirit lift itself in delightful thanksgiving on the awakening of Nature to geniality and the feeling of delight in my comfort mind [*sic*].

Lamb is super-annuated.<sup>2</sup> Do you understand—as Mme. says, he has left the India House on 2-3rd of his income and become a gentleman at large—a delightful consummation— What a strange taste is his That confines him to a view of the New River, with Houses opposite, in Islington— I saw the Novello's the other day— Mary and her babe are well—the Vincent all over—fat and flourishing moreover—and she dolorous that it should be her fate to add more than her share to the population of the world. How are all yours?—Henry and the rest— Percy still remembers him tho' occupied by new friendships and the feelings incident to his state of—Matrimony—having taken for better and worse to wife Mrs. Williams' little girl—

I write to you and to Marianne by a parcel sent to you by Bessy.—I suppose you will receive with these letters Bessy's new book<sup>3</sup> which she has done very well indeed and forms with the other a delightful prize for plant and flower worshippers—those favourites of God—which enjoy beauty unequalled and the tranquil pleasures of growth and life—bestowing incalculable pleasure and never giving or receiving pain.—Have you seen Hazlitt?—Notes of his travels appear in the Chronicle<sup>4</sup>—he is going over the same road that I have traversed twice. He surprised me by calling the Road from Susa to Turin dull — There where the Alps sink into low mountains and romantic hills—topped by ruined castles—watered by brawling streams—clothed by magnificent wal-

<sup>2</sup> This occurred in March.

<sup>3</sup> *Sylvan Sketches; or A Companion to the Park and the Shrubbery*: with illustrations from the works of the Poets (London, Taylor & Hessey, 1825). The book was dedicated to Marianne Hunt. Miss Kent's first book was *Flora Domestica*; or, The Portable Flower-Garden (1823).

<sup>4</sup> Hazlitt described his travels of 1824–25 in France and Italy in letters to the *Morning Chronicle*. Later they were published in one volume by Messrs. Hunt & Clarke.

nut trees—there where I wrote to you in a fit of enchantment excited by the splendid scene—but I remembered—first that he travelled in winter when snow covers all and besides he went from what I approached and looked at the plain of Lombardy with the back of the Diligence between him and the loveliest scene in nature— So much can *relation* alter *circumstance*.

Claire is still I believe at Moscow—[*MS torn*] W[hen I] return to Italy, I shall endeavour to enable her [to go] thither also.—I shall not come without my J[ane] who is now necessary to my existence almost.—Throu[gh her] own resources she has recourse to the cultivation [of her] mind and amiable and dear as she ever was—she [is now] in every way improved and become more valuable [to me].

Trelawny is in the cave with Ulysses, not in Polypheme's cave, but in a vast cavern of Parnassus; inaccessible and healthy and safe, but cut off from the rest of the world. Trelawny has attached himself to the party of Ulysses, a savage chieftain, without any plan but personal independence and opposition to the Government. Trelawny calls him a hero. Ulysses speaks a word or two of French; Trelawny, no Greek! Pierino [Gamba] has returned to Greece.

Horace Smith has returned with his diminished family (little Horace is dead). He already finds London too expensive, and they are about to migrate to Tunbridge Wells. He is very kind to me.

I long to hear from you, and I am more tenderly attached to you and yours than you imagine; love me a little, and make Marianne love me, as truly I think she does. Am I mistaken, Polly?

Your affectionate and obliged,  
Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq./ Ferma in Posta./ Firenze./ Florence./ La Toscane/  
L'Italie. POSTMARK: CHAMBERY. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED:  
Shelley and Mary, IV, 1057–61; Marshall, II, 133–37; Letters, 156–64. TEXT:  
From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 226. To John Howard Payne\*<sup>1</sup>

5 Bartholomew Place  
Kentish Town  
Thursday Eve<sup>s</sup> [April 14, 1825]

My dear Sir

You failed in bringing me Mrs. Kenney— Why doubly fail in not calling [*word cut out*]<sup>2</sup> yourself?—It was not until today [that I] heard that our friend was gone to Brighton and I should have despaired of the possibility of inducing you to make this [? Nor]th Passage had not the kind Gods' sent me a substitute in her place—Mrs. Harwood called on me today & expressing a great desire to find some opportunity of conversing with you concerning

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of Mary's relationship with Payne and Washington Irving, see Appendix II.

<sup>2</sup> Brackets indicate words cut out of the MS.

your American friend,<sup>8</sup> I thought that I might venture to say that I [would] ask you to meet her here—& fixed with her [ ] Evening (i.e. at 6 P.M.) Will you come & over a cup of hyson drink to the better delivering of Embassies & that all [? messengers] do not set amicable powers by the ears<sup>4</sup>—

When do you expect Mrs. Kenney to return?

I am, dear Sir

Your faithful Servant

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: J. Hayward Esq. [*sic*]<sup>5</sup>/ 22 Lancaster Street/ Burton Crescent. POST-MARK 12.NOON.12/ AP.15/ 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6797); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo, with seal; words cut out in 5 places. PRINTED: *Romance*, 20–21. TEXT: From original letter.

## 227. To John Howard Payne\*

5 Bartholomew Place  
Kentish Town.

Wednesday Evening [April 20, 1825].

My dear Sir

If I had been at home on Monday Evening we would have mocked the unkind God who introduced such confusion into my ill-formed pot-hooks— It was ill done indeed after causing me to form a thousand conjectures concerning your absence on Sunday, to lead you to the empty nest the day after— Will you tempt fortune again?—At least I can assure you that you will not find me from home in the morning—though I am just now so implicated as not to be able to fix any evening but of so distant a date that I hope that your kindness and my good genius will permit us to meet in the interim— Will you walk over Saturday or Sunday or any other [day] that may be most convenient to you when it will give me to [*sic*] sincere pleasure to find that neither the mistakes of spoken or written embassies can make good long their evil influence

I am, my dear Sir

Yours faithfully

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] You talk of a walk from the Strand—and mention being *here* for a

<sup>8</sup> Washington Irving.

<sup>4</sup> In his letter of [August 16, 1825] to Irving, Payne explains this: "Some blunder made by Thomas Holcroft [son of Mrs. Kenney] in a message . . . for a long time stopped all correspondence with Mrs. S., who some months before had written to me frequently for orders."—F. B. Sanborn (ed.), *The Romance of Mary W. Shelley, John Howard Payne, and Washington Irving* (Boston, The Bibliophile Society, Printed for Members only, 1907), 20.

To Mary's letter Payne replied: "Mrs. Kenney's departure was (like everything she does) very sudden. Her husband was seized with a paroxysm of domesticity . . . and enjoined her on her allegiance to leave him a forlorn bachelor no longer." His failure to come himself was because he "had taken no notice of the number of your house or the name of the Row."—*Romance*, 21–22.

<sup>5</sup> This erroneous name doubtless means that Payne was at that time disguising his identity, probably to escape arrest for debt.



WASHINGTON IRVING

*from the painting by Gilbert Stuart Newton*

*Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library and the  
Historical Society of the Tarrytowns, Inc. The  
portrait is on exhibition at the Philipse Castle  
Restoration, North Tarrytown, New York*



few days—but as this *here* is not geographically described— I venture still you [*for to*] address you as before.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6800); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 24–25. TEXT: From original letter.

228. *To John Howard Payne\**

[Kentish Town] Friday Morn<sup>s</sup> [April 22, 1825]

My dear Sir

I was excessively annoyed to find that you had called fruitlessly yesterday—I had calculated that you would not receive my note in time for a visit & so did not include Thursday “in the bond.”—

Will you drink tea with me tomorrow—as a cold of Percy’s will detain me at home from my expected engagement—

If you are in the Strand you will find stages in James St. Covent Garden every hour—if in Lancaster Street attain the turnpike of Battle Bridge at 10 minutes exactly after any hour being struck, & soon one of our vehicles will pass—which on being directed will set you down at my door—

You see how diligently I try to repair an inconsequence which must not make you think me unpunctual which I am not & believe me, dear Sir

Very truly yours

M Shelley

ADDRESS: J. Hayward Esq [*sic*] / 22 Lancaster Street / Burton Crescent. POST-MARK: 12.NOON.12 / AP.22 / 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6798); A.L.S., 3 pp. (4½ x 3½ inches), with seal. PRINTED: *Romance*, 25–26. TEXT: From original letter.

229. *To John Howard Payne\**

Kentish Town

Saturday Morning [April 30, 1825]

My dear Sir

Thank you for your kind attention in sending me the books—though as far as I have yet gone they grievously disappoint me. It is a melancholy consideration that the Creator of Lanton, Leather-Stockings & my beloved Long Tom should consent to put Lionel Lincoln forth to the world<sup>1</sup>—

You are very good to say all that you do in your letter; you put too high a price upon what was the result of the instinct as it were of self-preservation which led me to cultivate the only society which could alleviate almost unendurable sorrow— But while you disclaim vanity, you must not make me vain—or perhaps worse, egoistical— That is the worst part of a peculiar situation, which by making you the subject of over attention to others creates an undue estimation of self in one’s own mind— But I am resolved not to allow myself to be in my own way—but to talk and think of something less near

<sup>1</sup> James Fenimore Cooper’s *Lionel Lincoln* was published in 1825.



at hand— Will you not allow me to preserve this laudable determination?

I was unable to go to the theatre yesterday evening— But if Virginius<sup>2</sup> should be acted & the thing practicable I should like to see it— If I do not see you before I will write concerning the arrangements for the opera— By the bye—a box would be preferable wherever it might be, if it can be obtained.—

Do not talk of frowns— You are good & kind & deserve therefore nothing but kindness— But we must step lightly on the mosaic of circumstance for if we press too hard the beauty & charm is defaced— The world is a hard taskmaster & talk as we will of independance we are slaves Adieu

I am truly yours

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6799); A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 32–33. TEXT: From original letter.

### 230. To John Howard Payne

Wednesday [? May 4, 1825]

Kentish Town

My dear Payne

There seems to be an ambiguity about Friday, which makes it better that we should have nothing to do with it. I have seen Virginius & it was on Mrs. Williams's account that I wished to go—but her health is delicate & she is afraid of going out two evenings together.

The engagement of Saturday I consider fixed as fate—if you will permit it so to be; for we depend upon you as our escort. Will you *find yourself* between 5 & 6 on Saturday Afternoon at Mrs. Cleveland's (Mrs. Williams's Mother) 24, Alsop's Buildings, New Road, opposite to Baker Street—where you will find us, a coach & every thing prepared. Come early because we are musical enough to wish to hear the Overture—& moreover to have our choice of places in the pit.—

Your octavo pages<sup>1</sup> admonish me not to trespass upon your time— Yet will you send me a line to say that you have received this—or I may fancy it

<sup>2</sup> By T. Sheridan Knowles. It was first produced by Macready on May 17, 1820, and ran for fourteen nights. It was published in 1820.

<sup>1</sup> Payne had written: "... we may not meet in the week. I am bound to the oar, as you will infer when I mention a contract to manufacture five hundred octavo pages between this and the twenty-fifth. . . . I can have your company without oppressing you with mine. You are perpetually in my presence, and if I close my eyes you are still there, and if I cross my arms over them and try to wave you away, still you will not be gone. This madness of my own imagination flatters itself with the forlorn hope of a delightful vagueness in part of your note. From sheer perverseness, it sees imperfectly and calls it twilight, then plays fantastic gambols with the self-created obscurity. Amen! If the *fata morgana* will fling these pretty pictures over the heart, are we to shut our eyes and not rejoice in them? They are as beautiful as reality while they last, and when reality itself fades, what becomes of the difference? I would not have you check my delusion. . . .

"Yet, for all your smiling, I know very well what that part of your letter means which I pretended just now not to understand. . . . I am grateful—and care nothing about myself, so I may care for you, and tell you so without your being angry."—*Romance*, 34–36.

pursuing you to Dover, until I hear that it is safely housed with yourself in Arundel St.—

Although you deprecate the subject I must thank you for all “favours received” & I include kind thoughts as well as kind actions—although I truly know how entirely your imagination creates the admired as well as the admiration— But do not I entreat you frighten me by any more interpretations— although be sure I am & always shall be

Your sincere friend

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6801); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 37–38. TEXT: From original letter.

### 231. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Sunday [? May 8, 1825]

My dear Payne

We were altogether unlucky last night—since our opera was changed and we did not see you—and moreover beheld *Clari*<sup>1</sup> cruelly murdered— Nothing ever was managed so ill—& parts—quite different from yours in the worst possible taste— We quitted it on an incipient hiss which threatened damnation—

What divine weather I live now— Kentish Town is odorous with hay— Shall you be here today?—I hope not since I go out—but I leave this in case of a call— We were unable to charm the eyes of your man Friday last night being obliged to enter town in another way

Lamb I hear is not well at all— I hope soon to see you in some manner & I am

Yours ever truly

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6816); A.L.S., 4 pp. 16mo (3¾ x 4¾ inches), enclosed in the letter of [May 11]. PRINTED: *Romance*, 55. TEXT: From original letter.

### 232. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Wednesday [? May 11, 1825]

My dear Payne—

I write in a desperate hurry with the vilest of pens which I have not time to mend— The enclosed was waiting for you on Sunday as I expected a call—but by mischance it was not given you—

I am afraid that we shall hardly have courage to make another visit to that desperate coquette the opera—unless it were for something very stupendous & very certain— We wish to see *Così fan tutti*—but do not wish to be

<sup>1</sup> Payne's *Clari*; or, *The Maid of Milan*, an opera, first produced at Covent Garden on May 8, 1823. This opera contained the famous “Home, Sweet Home.”

disappointed—but before I decide I must consult my gentle oracle [Jane Williams]—

Kean!—Yes truly—fire & water for him—on the stage—the characters?—what will he play? Sir G[iles] O[verreach]—Othello—Hamlet—of these I am sure—perhaps R[ichard] III— I do not wish to go Monday but by that day will write & tell you, my very kind & obliging friend—when I will go—

This note—I am ashamed of—and it is ashamed of me—i.e., the white paper is angry at being so streaked

But I am in a hurry So with many thanks

Ys. truly

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6811); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo, enclosure (note of [May 8]). PRINTED: *Romance*, 57 (dated June 8). TEXT: From original letter.

### 233. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Wednesday Eve<sup>r</sup> [? May 11, 1825]

My dear Payne

I wrote to you today in so great an hurry that I hardly know what I said—And I forgot to add that I should be glad if you could without trouble get me 4 Box admissions for D[rury] L[ane] on Friday—for W[illiam] Tell.<sup>1</sup>—

I found the inhabitants of Gower Place suffering under a visitation of painters—nor can I extract them from that scent to my hay-odorous Kentish Town until Sunday— Even for that day Mrs. G[odwin] had a scruple of conscience having asked you to call on them that day— But I told her that if you were disengaged—I did not doubt that you would not excessively repine at the prolongation of your walk—and dared undertake for you (if, as before said, that you were not otherwise engaged) that you would dine with them here that day. Will you come?—We shall all be happy to see you— It is, I think, 20 years since we met—

We dine at four

Yours ever truly & obliged

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6812); A.L.S., 4 pp. 16mo (3¾ x 4½ inches). PRINTED: *Romance*, 57–58 (dated June 8). TEXT: From original letter.

### 234. To John Howard Payne

[Kentish Town] Saturday [May 14, 1825]

My dear Payne

The very little pretention I have to a character for consistency is so deservedly lost with you that I hardly dare vindicate it on the present occasion.— But indeed I said that I would go to anything but Othello—which I saw at

<sup>1</sup> By Sheridan Knowles. It was produced by Macready on May 11, 1825, and ran for eleven nights. It was published before it was produced—on May 9.

Venice & do not care about hearing again— Accordingly when I saw Othello advertised today, I so engaged myself that it will be impossible for me to avail myself of Elliston's ticket— Is this sufficient defence?—What can I say? Without a little encouragement I hardly venture to add that next Saturday if Tancredi or Romèò—or Nina or any thing but Othello is sung by Mad<sup>me</sup> Pasta<sup>1</sup> it would give me great pleasure to go—or to *Così Fan Tutti*.—Are you, by the bye, tired of playing the *escudero* to us— It *was* hard work last time— But as we shall not again stay for the ballêt I hope we shall be able to manage it more conveniently to all parties— But do not disarrange yourself on our account.—

Nor can I unfortunately go to D[rury] L[ane] on Monday, since I expect a visitor from the country— I fear to offend by sending back the orders & so shall use them, unless you wish for them in which case I entreat you to send for them without any scruple.

You refer to a past note of mine—which is dismal—for I forget all I ever said in any note I ever wrote—and the sight of a letter which has been written & sent coming back on me again, I fear more than a ghost— I *could* not accuse you of any thing bordering on *fatuitè*.—

I looked out for you at D[rury] L[ane]—but could not find you— I was greatly interested & amused— The Author & Actor are made for each other; the forte of both being tenderness & passion in domestic feelings—

Your note looks as if you remembered all the nonsense I talked rurally<sup>2</sup> with Jane & you & the silent man in Lambs garden—but do you know I am rather given to talk nonsense—and then only half of it was nonsense—a veil—a make-believe which means every thing & nothing,—if this is intelligible<sup>3</sup>

I would ask you to call early next week to arrange but I fear octavo pages perhaps you will write—

I am yours ever  
M W Shelley

ADDRESS: John Howard Payne Esq./ 29 Arundel Street/ Strand. POSTMARK: 12.NOON.12/ MY.14/ 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6802); A.L.S., 4 pp. 16mo (3½ x 4½ inches), with 1 piece (inside of cover) 7½ x 4½ inches; with seal. PRINTED: *Romance*, 41–42. TEXT: From original letter.

### 235. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Wednesday [May 18, 1825]

My dear Payne

There is no opera on Saturday—I shall like to go to D[rury] L[ane] & shall engage Mrs. Godwin to go with me if she is well enough—perhaps you will meet us at the theatre— But I will write again when all is arranged—

<sup>1</sup> Giuditta Pasta (1798–1865).

<sup>2</sup> Printed "usually" in *Romance*.

<sup>3</sup> Payne replied: "I have no recollection of any particular conversation in Lamb's garden, but be certain of this,—I am determined never to remember anything about you which may not be remembered with pleasure."—*Romance*, 43.

Remember for the opera I do not want to see Pasta in Otello or Simiramide but in Roméo or Tancredi or Nina, &c—any night that they are represented—You are very good to annoy yourself for me in this way

Will you obtain for me 2 or four admissions to C[ovent] G[arden] some night of Miss Foote's performance, as I wish to accommodate Mrs. Williams's mother— Thank you for W[ashington] I[rving].<sup>1</sup> I write in haste & am

Yours ever

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Do not trouble your servant, which goes against my conscience—but write by the post.—

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6810); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 43–44. TEXT: From original letter.

### 236. To John Howard Payne\*

Thursday [May 19, 1825]  
Kentish Town.

My dear Payne

Pasta advertizes her benefit for next Thursday—and I and some friends have agreed to go. Of course the tickets for such an expedition must be *purchased*. Will you have the goodness to buy 4 for me— But I should think that no time must be lost. I believe that if 4 box tickets are bought, all of the same box—one is admitted earlier & has the chance of a better seat.—Will you make enquiries about all this for me. I hope to see you at D[rury] L[ane] on Saturday when you can communicate progress I need not say that if you can make it out, how pleased we shall be at your joining us.— You see I take you at your word & will not make any apology, only thanking you very sincerely—

Yours very truly

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq/ 29 Arundel Street/ Strand. POSTMARK: 7.NIGHT.7/ 19.MY/ 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6808); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8 vo, with seal. PRINTED: *Romance*, 44–45. TEXT: From original letter.

### 237. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Friday—Noon [May 20, 1825]

My dear Payne

When I wrote yesterday I had not seen Mrs. Godwin nor arranged for tomorrow—so excuse this supernumerary note— I have depended, as you kindly assured me I should have them, on 4 orders & Places—if I have overstepped the mark let me know without delay; if not it will be sufficient that you send them to Mrs. G[odwin] 195 Strand in the course of tomorrow. I trust that you will do us the pleasure of joining us at the theatre—for I want to

<sup>1</sup> Probably one of Irving's books.

see you to thank you in person for your kindness—& moreover I have something else to say about the production of a friend of mine<sup>1</sup>

I am yours truly & obliged

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] A note from my friends makes me add if you have not already bought the tickets for Thursday not to take any steps about them till I see you—if you have—never mine— Some of us will go at any rate—Adieu

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6809); A.L.S., 4 pp. 16mo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 46–47. TEXT: From original letter.

### 238. To John Howard Payne

[Kentish Town] Saturday [May 21, 1825]

My dear Payne

I shall be most happy to see you at the theatre this evening though I hope to make such arrangements as to preclude your thinking it necessary to escort me but I am not quite sure— I am extremely obliged to you for the trouble you take for me.

Ever yours

M W S

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6807); A.L.S., 1 p. 16mo. Printed: *Romance*, 47. TEXT: From original letter.

### 239. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Friday Morn\* [May 27, 1825]

Amabilissimo Cavaliere

Will you not think me impertinent if I request you to find for me & let me know at your earliest convenience the number of Lady Morgan's abode in Berner's Street.—

Will you be so kind as to tell me what you paid for our tickets—that I may relieve my burthened conscience of a part of my debt to you—though the part I feel most, your more than polite kindness, your goodness in annoying yourself so much for me must still remain unpayable.

I have looked but not seen a handsome Spaniard looking out in Kentish Town for two donzellas whose adventures last night were certainly very ridiculous— My head aches this morning from the result though neither ice nor softer flame occasions it—& as yet I am still faithful to W[ashington] I[rving]!!!<sup>2</sup>

Yours, my dear Payne

Most truly & obliged

Mary Shelley

<sup>1</sup> A play written by Jane Williams. See Letter 244.

<sup>2</sup> Payne explains this: "The allusion . . . is to some laughing at the opera on this occasion about a Spaniard who caught the attention of the ladies in so marked a manner as to attract his. He followed them out. A remark of mine on the subject induced Mrs. S. to ask, 'Is that in Grand-papa? It is worthy of him.' *Grandpapa* had then just been damned."—*Romance*, 49.

[P.S.] I hardly dare ask you to come & call considering your occupations—With regard to future operas “the streets are so broad & the lanes are narrow”—the impediments so innumerable [*sic*]<sup>1</sup>—that notwithstanding my adoration of Pasta & admiration of Begnis I fear I must resolve to confine our visits there to one only—to see Romèo.

By the bye one day (o this vile pen!) next week I shall go to the Lambs—How far shall you feel inclined to accompany me hither or meet me there—remember this is for my “pleasure” not my “advantage” so do not inconvenience yourself.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6803); A.L.S., 4 pp. 16mo, with a note by Payne explaining certain allusions in the letter, 1 p. PRINTED: *Romance*, 48–49 (omits postscript). TEXT: From original letter.

## 240. To John Howard Payne\*

Kentish Town  
May 30th [1825]

My dear Payne

We prefer Saturday to Thursday,—if we are sure of Romèo for the latter day.

I confess that the greater part of your note is inexplicable to me. Pity what you call my inexperience, and write more intelligibly; it would seem that you fancy that you began to know me better, when in fact you know me less than ever. It is foolish however to guess at an explanation painful to me, in what I own that I cannot understand.<sup>1</sup>

You forget to answer a part of my note—the expense of the admissions. You promised on this occasion to be “an honest man & true”—and I claim your promise with the greater eagerness—since it will save me the trouble of enquiring the prices of Eber.

I am yours ever & obliged  
Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6804); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 51–52. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> The unintelligible part of Payne's letter was the following: “I am glad you return to Irving, for it is tantalizing to have one's heart in a state of miscellany. What I myself might have thought on Saturday, could I have presumed so far as to feel a personal interest in your fidelity—! Is *ice* a non-conductor? But if it is, how do you convey impressions?”

“With the tenderest paternal solicitude for your inexperience, believe me, Your most affectionate—Grandpapa’.”—*Romance*, 51.

To Mary's letter above Payne replied: “All I remember of what I wrote is, that some little *badinage* of yours was answered by *badinage*; and that there was some ridiculous play upon words, which, I apprehend, you have taken in a light I never dreamed of. . . .”

“I *believe* I know you, and am *sure* that I value you thoroughly; and my having courted your society with a thorough conviction of the unequal terms under which it must be conferred might, I could have hoped, have protected me against constructions which, if painful to you, to me must be infinitely distressing.”—*Romance*, 52–53.

241. *To John Howard Payne*

[Kentish Town] Monday [? May 30, 1825]

My dear Payne

After due consideration, Mrs. Williams &amp; I have concluded—

To call in Arundel St. in a coach at half-past 6— Without alighting, we will leave bonnets &c. which your man Friday will bring to the opera at the right time—and we shall not stay for the ballêt— If the hour I have mentioned be too early let me know. This is far the best mode of proceeding & will not take us at all out of our way.—

Adieu—Au revoir!

Yours ever  
M W S

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6806); A.L.S., 1 p. 16mo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 48. TEXT: From original letter.

242. *To John Howard Payne\**

Kentish Town May 31 [1825]

A bad conscience, you know, my dear Payne, is proverbially susceptible— And the feeling that what passed last Saturday was not quite *en règle* made me captious. I accused myself & so did not like to be accused (as I thought) by another. This explanation must be my apology for looking seriously upon badinage. I was annoyed at finding a picture turn into a man—

You say nothing of Roméo—unless I hear from you to the contrary, Mrs. Williams and I will call in Arundel Street at ½ past six on Saturday—though if there is to be a crush that will be too late, unless, as before, you get a ticket for a Gallery box & we can enter the pit from above Stairs. The opera you know begins at seven on Saturday, so we shall not again steal your Lawyer's [? sugar], but you can join us in our coach.

A part of your present note is very wrong—very wrong indeed— I can only say that I hold myself altogether the obliged person & that I am

Your sincere friend  
M W Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6805); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 53–54. TEXT: From original letter.

243. *To Leigh Hunt*

Kentish Town, June 27 [1825]

My dear Hunt

You can hardly be more delighted at the idea of returning to Tottenham C[our]t Road and the Hampstead Coachmen, than are your friends that you should return, & return with pleasure, to these things.<sup>1</sup> If you were here just

<sup>1</sup> The Hunts left Italy in September and reached England in the middle of October. They settled in Bloomsbury for a while, but in 1826 took a house at Highgate.



now you would find England in all its glory, and the people complaining of the Italian heat of the weather, though like me, I think you would find *qualche differenza*— But the English expose themselves to the sunny sides of the way at noon & then are angry to find it too warm—

Of course all questions of the future are rife are [*sic*] among us— Where will they live?—I told the N[ovello]s that I thought that you would take Shacklewell on your shoulders & bear it Westward— You could not live there—you who come for the sake of green fields would not be content with drab-coloured meadows & brick kilns— I saw Novello on Sunday and had a long talk with him about you. He desired me to send the kindest messages; and his renovated spirits & health shew with what eagerness he looks forward to the enjoyment of your society. But he told me to entreat you not to set out until you should hear from him again; as he is very anxious to arrange your debts before your arrival— He is a true, ardent & faithful friend to you. I think that your arrival will do them a great deal of good—for poor Mary by going to that place has shut herself out from society & pines—and Vincent has headaches in solitude— You ask about their children;—you know I cannot tell of the advancement of your knowledge on the subject—so for fear of being puzzling I will “tell the tale”—[Mary] Victoria—now at Boulogne & not to return—[Joseph] Alfred in Yorkshire—Cecilia—Edward about to go to Hazlewood—Emma—Clara [Anastasia]—Mary [Sabilla]—and Florence— The little boy, Charles Arthur, brought into the world last autumn died a month ago in consequence of a fall—he was a thriving child and this misfortune cut them up a good deal, until revived by the hopes of your return—such is a full true and particular account—

This does not intend to be a long letter or an answer to your last— When we meet, if the Gods permit, I will tell you one or two things which will I think surprize and perhaps move you—move you at least to excuse a little what you do not approve— I continue to live in quietness—the hope & consolation of my life is the society of Mrs. W[illiams]. To her, for better or worse I am wedded—while she will have me & I continue in the love-lorn state that I have since I returned to this native country of yours— I go or stay as she or rather our joint circumstances decide—which now with ponderous chain and heavy log enroot us in Kentish Town. I think of Italy as of a vision of delight afar off—and go to the opera sometimes merely for the sake of seeing my dear Italians & listening to that glorious language in its perfection

Where will you live my dear Hunt & my Polly? And what will you do?— Command me, I entreat you—if it appears that I can be of the slightest use to you. I am pleased to think that Persino<sup>2</sup> (who does not understand a word of Italian) will renew his friendship with your sweet Henry— I long to see Occhi Turchini—and to congratulate Thornton, when he shall be fairly established in an arm chair with his Bingley— Where will you live? Near Hamp-

<sup>2</sup> Percy Florence.

stead—not in Hampstead perhaps, it is so dear, & so far—but on the road to it, I think you might be accommodated— There are some empty Houses on Mortimer Terrace—but I believe my good Polly does not like that. My Polly, I traverse the gap fearless at ten at night and Jane & I in some of our disastrous journeys to see our friends, have passed it much later— Mafaccian loro— We'll talk Tuscan, Hunt, and I shall get more sick than ever for Valle che de'miei lamenti son pieni—So you are about to bid adieu to fireflies—azioli the Tuscan peasantry & Tuscan vines!—but no more of that—our feelings are so different and we have each such excellent reasons for the difference of our feelings on this subject—that we may differ & agree—the same is not the same, you know— Had you seen Italy as I saw it—had I seen it as you we should each be delighted with our present residence, nor for the world's treasure change— Adieu, dear Hunt, & love

Ys. faithfully—

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt Esq/ Ferma in Posta/ Firenze/ Florence—Italy. POSTMARKS: (1) ANGLETERRE (2) CHAMBERY (3) F 25 (4) [8]/ LUGLIO. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2754); A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 164–67. TEXT: From original letter.

## 244. To John Howard Payne\*

Tuesday

November 25th [*humorously for June 28, 1825*]

Kentish Town

My dear Payne

Mrs. Williams begs me to thank you for her for the attention you have paid to the drama— She has no idea of making the *radical* alterations that you suggest—

I am very sorry to have seen you in such ill spirits lately. Methinks I could give you a world of good advice—but I am so little didactic that I do not know how to set about it— And then I hope that it would no[t] come too late—& that by this time you are gay & hopeful— I trust that you will see me before you leave town—if you do leave it, which I hope you will not though this hope is I fear purely selfish on my part— You are good & kind to all except yourself— If you took to being bounteously, and you wont, courteous towards yourself I think you would arrive at being, as all other objects of your kindness are, quite in good humour with & grateful, for your own society.—

You made me expect that *another letter*<sup>1</sup> would have accompanied the book on Sunday—is it indelicate in me to ask for this? I should not of course unless you had first said that you would be good enough to shew it me— I hope to see you soon & am always

Your sincere friend

Mary Shelley

<sup>1</sup> By Washington Irving. Payne let Mary read some of Irving's letters to him.

[P.S.] With regard to Kean; the weather has been so bad that I have not been able to go to town to see the bills—but as I suppose he will play twice this week & no more I should like to go both times provided it be to Sir Giles [Overreach] Brutus—Hamlet—or in fact to any thing except Richard III—Shylock & Othello— I shall be at my fathers tomorrow evening, perhaps you can call there, or if not, you will I dare say be good enough to write to tell me by the earliest post—what he acts on Thursday & whether you can obtain places & orders for me for that night. If it be inconvenient to you to get 4; 2 will suffice

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6814); A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 68–69 (omits postscript). TEXT: From original letter.

### 245. To John Howard Payne

by the thermometer—November }  
By the calender—June } 29 | 1825 |.—Kentish Town

My dear Payne

I have read with great pleasure Irvine's letter—with greater because it dwells upon your circumstances— You are wrong in thinking that any details of this kind ever annoyed me— Once, I remember, a conversation about William's *visit* brought so forcibly to my mind scenes that took place now eleven years ago, that I became melancholy—for when will reflection on the happy, unfortunate past cease to have that effect on me?—But I take a real interest in your affairs; & moreover I am too much of an authoress after all, not [to] listen with avidity to the detail of any of the forms of life and the human mind—were it new it would be the more greedily caught up—but I am familiar with difficulties & what you term petty cares—

Well—to leave my defence; W[ashington] I[rving]'s letter pleases me greatly as I said— I trust that you will attend to his advice & be inspirited by his admonitions— While you retire to “solitude & silence” to seek there “health & peace”—I feel sure that you will be more than ever awake to laudable ambition & exhilarating industry—and moreover a *little* economical—and then without crossing the Atlantic in search of the dead you may patch up a native country out of this queer England—or France.—To the feelings of an English woman who has never dreamt of crossing the Atlantic, America appears cut off from human intercourse:—it cannot be the same to you—and therefore I may be in the wrong in my repugnance to your leaving us for it—

Your letter<sup>1</sup> gives me pain because you feel it & because it seems to place a barrier to any future meeting— Thus it is ever one's hard fate either to be

<sup>1</sup> On Saturday, June 25, Payne had plainly revealed to Mary that he was in love with her. In the course of the conversation Mary had not merely rejected his suit, but had stated that if she ever married again it must be to one of literary eminence, such as Washington Irving. Though deeply hurt, Payne did in no way blame Mary. In the long and interesting letter which he wrote her on June 29 (*Romance*, 69–74) he traces the history of his love for Mary and announces his intention to avoid her company until his feelings are under control. But he wishes still to be of

deserted & neglected—or, which turns out the same thing, to be liked to[o] well, & so avoided—few indeed have your kind generosity to offer, & I am sure sincerely offer, to do services to one thus circumstanced with you—nor do I think that I do other than please you when I receive your offers not only with thanks but with “acceptance bounteous”—and will do as you bid me & after these last words be laconic, till you greet me with the welcome news that I may shew you all the kindness and friendship I have for you, without doing you an injury.

I shall be glad to see Irvine’s letters—& the handwriting, crabbed after reading your distinct syllables, will become as clear to me as Lord Byron’s letterless scrawl— As to friendship with him— It cannot be—though every thing I hear & know renders it more desirable— How can Irvine surrounded by fashion rank & splendid friendships pilot his pleasure bark from the gay press into this sober, sad, enshadowed nook?

But our conversations shall not end with W. I. if they began with him, which I do not remember— Why indeed should they end at all but go on & grow sober as our years encrease— Nor if you desire to renew them, let a long interval elapse; for I mean only to live ten years longer & to have 37 engraved upon my tomb— In the meantime the *Sortes Virgilianae*, which I consulted today on the subject of my return to beloved Italy, promised that a magnificent dwelling should be prepared for me there near the rocks which resound far with the dashing of the sea, beside the torrents black with bituminous whirlpools,—which means the neighbourhood of Naples of course— Will you come & see me there?—So I shall not see you saturday—though I had fifty wise counsels to give & sage axioms to deliver— Is it so?—friday, I shall look at the bills & see whether I desire orders for Monday & send you word in measured phrase—yet be not too hard with me on this point—for the truth is though I can rein my spoken words—I find all the woman directs my written ones & the pen in my hand I gallop over fence & ditch without pity for my reader—*ecce signum!*

But you have taken the affair in hand so sagely & methinks, may I say it without the charge of vanity, so disinterestedly that I resign the rule to you —& will endeavour to conform to the laws you have enacted—which still permit me I hope to adhere to truth & subscribe myself, with deep interest in your welfare,

Your friend—

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6815); A.L.S., 8 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *ROMANCE*, 75–78. TEXT: From original letter.

service to her in supplying theater tickets. He likewise announces his intention to “act the hero”: “To return to the point at which our conversations began and have ended—Washington Irving—be assured I will act the hero in this business; and shall feel quite reconciled to the penalty to which my folly has condemned me, and which, I hope, I have firmness enough to make a light one, if my friendship should prove the stepping-stone to one in every way so much more gratifying and desirable.” See Appendix II.

246. *To John Howard Payne*

[Kentish Town] Monday Morning [? July 4, 1825]

My dear Payne

Kean's nights are limited to 3—and Othello & R[ichard] III are to make up two of these, neither of which do I wish to see.—But in recompense, we are to have Brutus on Thursday—and my obedience to Papa's orders is rewarded by my having another opportunity of seeing a play I have long wished to see—Can you get orders & places for me for Thursday—and will you let me know as soon as you can

I am yrs ever &amp; obliged

M W S.

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq/ 29 Arundel Street/ Strand. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6813); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 62 (dated June 20). TEXT: From original letter.

247. *To John Howard Payne\**

[Kentish Town] Wednesday [? July, 1825]

My dear Payne

I cannot go tomorrow as I feared—but I will go— I shall see my Janey tomorrow & arrange when—and I will write

Very truly yours

M W S.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6823); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

248. *To John Howard Payne (a fragment)*

[c. 1825]

I know nothing—it is 6 & no one is here— There is barely time— Yet I think we probably

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 10792); A.L., 1 p. (3 x 5 inches), a fragment. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original fragment.

249. *To John Howard Payne\**

[Kentish Town] Wednesday—[July 20, 1825]

My dear Payne

Will you let me have orders for four for Drury Lane for Friday

How does this divine weather agree with you— I find it infinitely agreeable—too luxurious a pleasure I allow to have always—for one can do little else than [than] sit in perfect quiescence, the genial atmosphere surrounding one—

How goes the world with you—except that this weather exhilarates me, I should be melancholy for I have been annoyed—

Yours ever

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] If tickets are going a begging—I should like 6 for Friday.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6822); A.L.S., 3 pp. 16mo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 80–81 (dated July 27). TEXT: From original letter.

250. *To John Howard Payne\**

[Kentish Town] Thursday [July 21, 1825]

I sincerely wish, my dear Payne, that you could physician my annoyances for then I am sure they would come to a speedy conclusion— Unfortunately it is not for myself but others that I am uncomfortable—& I feel that always more difficult to bear—

The Haymarket will do very well only let it be for Saturday instead of Friday.—The glory of the time has departed—how d[r]eary these clouds are, & yet I suppose that I am sola in regretting the dear insufferable heat

The orders I ask for are as you may guess for friends but if we continue cool I expect to be tempted to see Liston some of these days—

Yours ever

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] I am not in the slightest hurry for the life of Brown<sup>1</sup>—a month hence will do.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6818); A.L.S., 1 p. 4to. PRINTED: *Romance*, 81–82 (dated July 28). TEXT: From original letter.

251. *To John Howard Payne\**

[Kentish Town] Sunday Evening [ ? July 24, 1825]

My dear Friend

As the best mode of explaining your wishes to W[illiam Godwin, Jr.] I enclosed him your letter—at the Morning Chronicle office—where a missive will always reach him— You say nothing of yourself & the progress of your affair— I await impatiently news of both—

Can you get me a box for the opera for Tuesday—if you can let me have it if possible by 3 or 4 o'clock as else it is difficult to get a party together— If not for Tuesday, Thursday—but let me know

Yours Affly

M S.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 10791); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

252. *To John Howard Payne*

[Kentish Town, July 25, 1825]

Dear Payne—

In haste with a vile pen! I'll dispatch your note to William [Godwin, Jr.]

<sup>1</sup> Doubtless either W. Dunlap's *Life of Charles Brockden Brown* (Philadelphia, 1815, 2 vols.) or his *Memoirs of C. B. Brown* (London, 1822).

without delay he is very abominable— He quarrelled [with] me really before I let him have L[ionel] L[incoln]—& now—but do not fear I will send your note— I am to see you Thursday at Gower Place I believe if you are good enough to go there—

Ys. truly

M W S.—

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6821); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 80. TEXT: From original letter.

### 253. *To John Howard Payne\**

Thursday [July 28, 1825]  
Kentish Town

My dear Payne

I am afraid that I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you tonight as I expected—for Mrs. G[odwin] is again attacked by her painful complaint which naturally makes her averse to the slightest exertion—

This day is perfect— The most faultless one I think we have had—not too warm I trust for any one— If Don Giovanni or Figaro should be acted on the last night of the opera Jane & I would like to go—but not otherwise— If without any inconvenience you can get me 4 or 6 orders for Saddlers Wells I should like it—but do not stand, I entreat you, on any ceremony but be quite sure that I shall consider your declining an indiscreet request as a mark of kindness—

Poor dear Brown—what a delightful person he seems to have been— As for my favourite I[rving]—methinks our acquaintance proceeds at the rate of the Antediluvians who I have somewhere read thought nothing of an interval of a year or two between a visit— Alack I fear that at this rate if ever the Church should make us one it would be announced in the consolatory phrase that the Bride & Bridegrooms joint ages amounted to the discreet number of 145 & 3 months<sup>1</sup>

Am I ever to see you again? Hoping that I shall I am eternally

Your very true friend

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] If you do send me the S[addlers] W[ells] orders pray let me have them or notice of them a day before their date

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6817); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 82–83. TEXT: From original letter.

### 254. *To John Howard Payne*

[Kentish Town] Friday [July 29, 1825]

Not to keep your messenger, My dear Friend, I write even before I have read Irvine's letter. I trust that I shall see you, because I do not see why the

<sup>1</sup> This is the only passage in Mary's correspondence which, though playful, may be cited as proof that Mary wished seriously to marry Irving.

visit should be so painful as you suppose & truly hope that you will soon return to this country.—

Now, my dear Payne, tho' I am a little fool, do not make me appear so in Rue Richelieu by repeating tales out of school—nor mention the Antediluvians— But I am not afraid; I am sure you love me well enough not to be accessory in making me appear ridiculous to one whom I like & esteem, though I am sure that the time & space between us will never be shortened—perhaps it is that very certainty that makes me, female Quixote as I am, pay such homage to the unattainable Dulcinea in the Cueva de Montesinos—i.e. Rue Richelieu.

But again be not a tell tale so God bless you— Give my love, of course Platonic, to I[rving].

I am ys. ever

Mary W Shelley

[P.S.] I will send Browns life before Monday, & also I[rving]'s letter.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6819); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 85. TEXT: From original letter.

## 255. To John Howard Payne

Kentish Town. July 30 [1825].

Now that I have read Irvine's zealous & friendly letter, permit me, my dear Payne, to congratulate you on this new arrangement which appears to me to be very advantageous. It is melancholy to think however that you are going to leave us apparently for a long time— The more so as notwithstanding my earnest exertions I am now with less expectation than ever of leaving this country. It would give me the greatest pleasure if Jane & I could make out a visit to Paris, to break in on the monotony of the much-dreaded northern winter—but I have not at this moment any hope of being able to arrange even this little wandering from my English Prison—

Quel che fara—fara—Now during this divine weather I am so much happier than I have been for years that I will not by doleful prognostics dash my unaccustomed cheerfulness— If winter would never come I could, with the aid of my darling Janey's sunshiney countenance, not look at a lamp post with unchristian desires—

So again you will dwell in Rue Rich[e]lieu—dine at the Caffè Français—walk in the Tuilleries—carefully looking away from the spot where the diligence de Versailles puts up at—now and then take a walk to Rue de la Paix & standing on the threshold of Hotel Nelson—be transfixed one day with the bright vision of the Swallows of Kentish Town— After all you will probably come over here now & then to drive bargains with the London Theatres; in the mean time pray write to me, & be assured that I take a lively interest in your affairs, and that the news of your prosperity will be a sunbeam even in the midst of the sleet & ice of the coming winter Write me all kind of gossip



—for I own my failing. I delight in gossip concerning friends even as much as I am amused by it when it regards indifferent persons—

Ever yours—

M W S

[P.S.] As your last act of office as *Cavaliere Servente* w[oul]d you get me 2 Haymarket & 2 Lyceum admissions for any day after Monday next week<sup>1</sup>—

ADDRESS: John Howard Payne Esq/ 29 Arundel Street/ Strand. POSTMARK: 12.  
NOON.12/ JY.30/ 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6820); A.L.S.,  
5 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 85–87. TEXT: From original letter.

## 256. To John Howard Payne

Kentish Town. September 27th [1825]

My dear Payne

I hear from William who heard from your man Friday i.e. Lambert that you are shortly expected in Town. And if this does not come too late, it comes to request you to do me a favour on your return. Louisa Holcroft has two or three portraits in keeping for me—one of L[eigh] Hunt—one of my little lost William—and one, if it still exist, of Lord Byron. If it will not inconvenience you to[o] much, will you give my love to Louise and ask her to consign these to your care & will you bring them for me to London. I suppose there will be a duty to pay, at least on Hunt's—though I cannot tell as it is a chalk drawing & not a painting. That of my child is damaged & they will therefore hardly require any on that—and that of L[ord] B[yr]on is too small—but whatever is necessary I doubt not that you will do. Though if it should inconvenience you, do not scruple to decline the commission, quite sure that I shall not take ill your so doing.

Though I am most happy to hear of your return to *my beloved* country yet I trust this does not arise from any disappointment in your views; probably you only come for a short period. You will find Mrs. Williams & myself in *statu quo* & having no gentle Cavalier to escort us, we have staid like good housewives at our several homes—only once having been to the Haymarket and that on a moral principle—to see “Quite Correct”—for how could we answer it to our consciences not to take such an advantageous opportunity of improvement—of course throughout the exhibition we were “Quite Correct”—so very correct were we—however that is nothing to the purpose—but I assure you the moral lesson<sup>2</sup> was not thrown away. By the bye I went also with Mrs. G[odwin] to hear Tavrace [*sic*]—a more dull composition never was tolerated—but it was considered good taste to admire the music—some of which was tolerable. I never was more shocked that [than] by Miss Paton's

<sup>1</sup> Shortly after receiving this letter Payne went to Paris. On August 16, after having arranged the foregoing correspondence with Mary (including copies of his own letters), he wrote to Irving a letter (printed in Appendix II) asking him to read the correspondence and see for himself that Mary Shelley had a deep interest in Irving and had hoped through him (Payne) to cultivate a real friendship with Irving.

<sup>2</sup> Printed “moral upon us” in *Romance*.

or rather Lady Williams' (for she is really married they say) appearance—I never saw a woman so changed & the faces she makes when singing put one in mind of a cat trying to swallow a bone—her feet are the only prettinesses she has left, so I fixed my eyes on that while she feasted my ears—for her singing is good.

I have also been for 10 days to Windsor—where I rambled to my old haunts—Windsor—Eton &c is the only spot of English ground for which I have an affection. We were delighted each morning too by hearing the King's band practise for an hour & a half—the finest band in the world perhaps consisting of 44 wind instruments, whose effect is so much finer than those scraping strings— In sacred pieces they rose to the majesty of an organ—in lighter airs their delicate execution seemed the work of fayry powers. The grand disappointment was that I could not obtain a sight of my liege Lord his Sacred Majesty— It was too provoking— I prepared my best curls & smiles & curtsy & walked up each day to the castle with my companion vainly— The servants in waiting began to know us & one old fat footman commiserated our fate mightily when we asked for the last time whether his Majesty was expected & told him that it was our last chance— “I am quite sorry, ladies—I am sure his Majesty would have been glad to see you—he is always glad to see & be seen by ladies.”—What a flattering prospect—the while thus we fished the object of our angling was seated calmly in a boat fishing for *less* fish on Virginia Water.

Enough nonsense, you will say, my dear Payne—I have pity on you & cease especially as my paper warns me to add only that I am

Ys. faithfully

Mary W Shelley

ADDRESS: A Monsieur/ M. Howard Payne/ No. 89 Rue Richelieu/ à Paris.  
 POSTMARKS: (1) ANGLETERRE (2) F 25 (3) [ ]/ 1825. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6824); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Romance*, 89–92. TEXT: From original letter.

## 257. *To Leigh Hunt\**

Kentish Town

28 Dec. 1825

My dear Hunt

You may remember that immediately on reading your Mss [manuscript] concerning our Shelley,<sup>1</sup> I wrote to you thanking you for it and pointing out a few mistakes or omissions to be rectified or made, and I sent it back to Mr. Bowring with my approval. I could not therefore have spoken of it in the terms quoted as mine.—I afterwards found that Peacock had it & he mentioned to me a circumstance which I wondered had not struck me before—but which is vital. It regards Shelley & Harriet—where you found your reasoning on a mistake as to fact—they did not part by mutual consent—and

<sup>1</sup> See Letter 225, note 1.

Shelley's justification, to me obvious, rests on other grounds; so that you would be obliged to remodel a good part of your writing. Peacock was urgent that such a mistake should not pass, and on account of various arrangements with Sir T[imothy] S[helley] was unwilling that it should be printed. I should have wrote concerning this to you, but your speedy arrival was announced—and I delayed mentioning it till I saw you.—I have not seen Mr. Bowring or communicated with him on the subject since the note mentioned above. Peacock is in possession of the Mss.

I am, My dear Hunt

Yours affectionately

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: British Museum (T. J. Wise Collection); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: Dowden, I, 426 (quot., 12 lines); *A Shelley Library*, edited by Wise, 6–7. TEXT: From original letter.

## 258. *To John Howard Payne\**

Sunday [? 1826].<sup>1</sup> Kentish Town

My dear Payne

I return the papers—infamous trash! they are not worth looking at.

I & Jane think of going to the Lambs on Wednesday. Will you meet us there? If anything should prevent us, I will let you know.

Yours ever

M S

ADDRESS: J. H. Payne Esq. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6826); A.L.S., 1 p. 16mo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 94. TEXT: From original letter.

## 259. *To John Howard Payne*

Kentish Town,

Jan. 28, 1826.

When do you think to revisit England? and are you all come to a decision concerning your return to America?—my own feelings (being European) makes me think that having once realized your prospects there, you would hasten back here—thinking (as I do with regard to human beings), that a middle aged country—more fertile in memories, associations, and human relics than in natural productions is to be preferred to the savage untutored and self-willed though beauteous vigor of a land just springing from infancy to youth . . .

ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 4 pp. 4to. Sold January 21–24, 1929, by Anderson Galleries as item 1072 of the Library of Jerome Kern. Bought by George J. C. Grasberger, Philadelphia, for \$250. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Quoted from catalogue of Jerome Kern sale.

<sup>1</sup> The date of this letter is very uncertain.

## 260. To John Bowring\*

Kentish Town

25 Feb. [1826]

Your note, my dear Friend, is on many accounts gratifying to me— But you must not wonder at my fear of intruding—for I know your time to be so valuable—& being myself a broken branch from the tree of life—a solitary creature—I am tainted by that morbid feeling which I dislike, while I at times yield to it of feeling myself neglected & forgotten— Pardon this last apology—I will never make another to you—trusting to the kind sentiments you express, I [will] be vain enough to believe that you really have a pleasure in now and then hearing from me & being asked to do such kind offices as I have before now solicited from you.

Do not think me capricious if I defer my negotiation with Dr. Schinas—it is not I but another female, Fortune, who is guilty of caprice on this occasion—I must wait a little before I can take the lessons I desire.

Do not be afraid of losing the impression you have concerning my lost Shelley by conversing with any one who knew him about him— The mysterious feeling you experience was participated by all his friends, even by me, who was ever with him—or why say *even*;—I felt it more than any other, because by sharing his fortunes, I was more aware than any other of his wondrous excellencies & the strange fate which attended him on all occasions— Romance is tame in comparison with all that we experienced together & the last fatal scene was accompanied by circumstances so strange so inexplicable so full of terrific interest (words are weak when one speaks of events so near the heart) that you would deem me very superstitious if I were only to narrate simple & incontestible facts to you.—I do not in any degree believe that his being was regulated by the same laws that govern the existence of us common mortals—nor did any one think so who ever knew him. I have endeavoured, but how inadequately, to give some idea of him in my last published book<sup>1</sup>—the sketch has pleased some of those who best loved him—I might have made more of it but there are feelings which one recoils from unveiling to the public eye— I have the greatest pleasure in sending you the writing for which you ask.—

I hope you have not been a sufferer by this commercial turmoil— I am very sorry to hear of the illness of your children— My little boy had the measles in the Autumn but is now quite well—

Did I not mention to you that I had a portrait of Shelley—it would encrease your feeling with regard to him— Some fine spring morning you will

<sup>1</sup> *The Last Man*, in 3 vols., published by Henry Colburn earlier in February. The character of Adrian was modelled after Shelley. The publication resulted in trouble with Sir Timothy Shelley, who objected to his son's widow bringing herself before the public. Her suspended income was restored only after Peacock and Whitton had exchanged several letters, which required a considerable time. See Marshall, II, 149–50.

perhaps come and see it when I shall again have the pleasure of seeing you—

I am, My dear Sir,

Most truly yours

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] By the bye I have some more Mss. of Shelley's which I think will interest you— Shall I send them to you?— I have also some letters—but these would be to be read by you only—

The longer poem I send was never published— It was called "The Mask of Anarchy"<sup>2</sup>—and written in the first strong feelings excited by the cutting down of the people at Manchester in 1819—

ENDORSED: Feby. 25.1826/ Mrs. Shelley/ [Ansd] 26. ORIGINAL: British Museum (T. J. Wise Collection); A.L.S., 7 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *The Athenaeum* (January 22, 1887); *The Mask of Anarchy* (Shelley Society Publications, Extra Series, No. 4, 1887), 51–52; *The Shelley Society's Papers*, Pt. I, (1888), 94 (incomplete); *The Note-Book of the Shelley Society* (1888), 152–53; *A Shelley Library*, edited by Wise, 19 (incomplete). TEXT: From original letter.

## 261. To John Howard Payne

Kentish Town

21 April—1826

My dear Payne

Are you alive? I hope you are, or my letter may fall into the hands of your executors, which I should be sorry for—however as to be prepared for the worst is the attribute of prudence, I, as a person of prudence (which you know I am) will write only concerning news, the Duke of Devonshire's mission to Muscovia—and the repairs of our Ambassador's Hotel at Paris—such are the topics here—while Greece falls and the defenders of Missolonghi are murdered. I take more than common interest in the affairs of Greece because I have known & even had an affection for Greeks, and the apathy with which their rebellion is regarded would surprize me, did I not know that all human beings & the English in particular require flappers, and pretty smart & oft repeated flaps to awaken them to attention.

I am not going to write a long letter; as I consider my writing at all, considering your long silence, rather an hazardous proceeding, and half suppose that you will looking at the signature exclaim "I once knew her—but it is so long ago"— I have not been in [*sic*] either in good health or good spirits lately—nor can I tell why, except that being early inoculated with a love of wandering and adventure, my monotonous present existence grows insupportably tedious There is no hope nor any help, which ought to make me contented they say; yet I cannot be so;—I am told I might be worse off—that reflection redoubles my melancholy—I have been happy—I might have continued as I was, had I not been destined to experience every reverse of unkind fortune. These thoughts will not leave me—I detest England; I am very

<sup>2</sup> Mary presented the MS of *The Mask of Anarchy* to Bowring. It is now in the T. J. Wise Collection, The British Museum. The poem was published, with a preface by Leigh Hunt, in 1832.

weary of all my occupations—I had almost said of all my friends—one only except—she is my saving angel.

You will laugh at our plan for this summer, which is no other than to spend a couple of months at Calais. It is necessary for the children's health to change air & go to the sea. Nor am I without hopes I may gain benefit from the same circumstances. After canvassing the merits of several English sea-ports—Jane started the idea of Calais— The place is ugly enough, perhaps dull—but I have a partiality for the people of Calais—then there is an excitement in the entire change of scene, language &c— In fact it is a thing decided upon. We chuse Calais in preference to Boulogne, principally because so many of our country people prefer Boulogne to Calais—and secondly—because at Calais there is no cliff and we both hate a white chalk cliff. We intend to begin to migrate the first week in July.

Pasta is at last come; I hope to see her at least once; though they intend to be very chary of orders. La Begnis<sup>1</sup> is not here this season; nor have I been tempted to get within the walls of the Opera House. The other evening we went to hear & were much entertained by Mathews— I had never heard him before— He has one great moral lesson which I wish some of my friends would learn— The eight little Dilberrys, whose 8 little knives and forks excite the sympathizing glances of those convened to eat of the family dinner; the entrance of the same—their qua[rrels] & their bows, & last the catastrophe of Phubsy (the dog) having run off with one of their *coarse* meat balls, was very entertaining and will prove I trust, instructive.<sup>2</sup>

I called with my father on Newton to see his picture before it went to the academy—and Kenny entreated me to meet him at his place, to which I consented— I went—but no Newton came— K. tells me he wants me to sit to him, but my aristocracy will not permit me to have my picture detained in his gallery—and I am too poor to pay for it—so this commencement of an acquaintance does not look auspicious.<sup>3</sup> In fact a thousand circumstance[s] in my amphibious situation renders it very difficult for me to make acquaintance to any purpose with any one— I believe you know my notion concerning acquaintances—in society at large they are pleasant, because if you have not

<sup>1</sup> Claudine de Begnis (1800–53), singer.

<sup>2</sup> The entertainment alluded to is to be found in *Charles Mathews' Entertainment for 1826*. Mrs. Mathews (*Memoirs of Chas. Mathews*, 1839, III, 567–68) gives this account of what Mary saw: "On Thursday, Mathews is invited to dine with his friend, Mr. Dilberry, 'in a family way.' He is accompanied by Mr. John Rally, an imperturbable quizzer. On their arrival, they have first to encounter a black female servant, with a baby Dilberry; and then enters Mrs. Dilberry in haste, with her *armorial bearings* (bracelets) in her hand. Mr. Dilberry they find in the dining-room, in the act of drawing a cork; and Mathews exhibits his contortions and strainings with great drollery. The guests are soon alarmed by the appearance of eight little knives and forks upon the table. The young Dilberrys soon follow; and, after delighting their visitors during dinner by their elegant irregularities, one of them, after dinner, sings a song, and another plays a lesson on the pianoforte fifty times over. Mr. Dilberry, too, attempts a song to an Irish air. The great difficulty is to observe the key; and in the course of his vocal displays he jumbles all the keys together with a facility which it would puzzle a first-rate singer to equal."

<sup>3</sup> Mary had been to Newton's studio at least once before—on July 17, 1824, while Newton was altering his portrait of Washington Irving.

many of them you are at a loss continually for (to use a vulgarity) small change—but to one sequestered like myself from the busy crowd, they are annoyances—taking up one's time, and ending in vanity and vexation— But it is only through long time, or some—strange arrangement of circumstances that one can mould an acquaintance into a friend.

I have a hope, which serves in a degree to cheer me, of seeing a very dear one this summer—our valued & excellent Trelawny talks of visiting England—there is one drawback, he has married,<sup>4</sup> and one never knows how much a wife may spoil a husband for his ante (not anti) matrimonial friends. My paper is filled—yet this is not a long letter—I have not room to say at large how truly I shall be pleased to hear good news of yourself and your projects. Have you received my book— W[illiam Godwin, Jr.] assures me that he sent it by diligence.—My father is well—Mrs. G[odwin] returns today from Rochester where she went to visit her lately widowed sister.—Jane desires her amicable salutations—she speaks of you with great kindness— Will you answer this letter?—I am truly yours

M.S.

[P.S.] This letter is very stupid—but I have no hope that the delay of a post or two wd. mend it because lately writing has been a great annoyance to me—and I can hardly force myself to write at all; so for the sake of the good will the attempt vouches for excuse the lame execution.

ADDRESS: John Howard Payne, Esq./ 87 Rue Richelieu,/ à Paris. POSTMARKS:  
(1) S. O. Kentish T<sup>a</sup>/ 2 py P.Paid (2) 18.PAID.26/ AP.25/ 7.NIGHT.7  
(3) Avril/ 28/ 1826 (4) F 26. ORIGINAL: Boston Public Library; A.L.S.,  
4 pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 262. To Charles Cowden Clarke\*

23 June [1826]  
Kentish Town

Dear C. C. C.

Here is defence II of my poor dear Velluti<sup>1</sup>— Do not say that it is too enthusiastic— Wherefore should not the enthusiasm he excites be published as

<sup>4</sup> Trelawny had married the sister of Odysseus, Tersitza Kamenou, 12 or 13 years old. The marriage was soon terminated by divorce after the birth of a daughter, Zella. See H. J. Massingham, *The Friend of Shelley, A Memoir of E. J. Trelawny* (London, Cobden-Sanderson, 1930), 252–57.

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni-Battista Velluti (1781–1861) had, with his rare soprano voice, enjoyed great success throughout Italy and in Vienna since 1800. His first appearance in London in 1825 caused a good deal of controversy, both because of his voice, which had become harsh in its middle register, and because of his lack of manly qualities. But on the whole he was successful, and was re-engaged as singer and director of music for 1826 at a salary of £2,300. In 1825 his salary had been £600. As Mary's letter shows, the controversy continued.

Mary's Defence I was published as a letter to the Editor of the *Examiner*, on Sunday, June 11, 1826, pages 372–73. The letter is dated "London, 29 May 1826," and is signed "Anglo-Italicus." Her letter was commended as well-written in *The Atlas* newspaper for Sunday, June 18, but the writer ridiculed Velluti as a singer, actor, and *man*. Mary admitted Velluti's deficiency as a singer, but praised his acting, graceful movement of arms and body, and his gentleness and tenderness. Mary's Defence II did not appear in the *Examiner*; nor probably in any other periodical, for the criticism of Velluti was already stale as news. Several notices had appeared earlier in June in the *Times*, the *Atlas*, and the *Examiner*, but nothing further appeared in those journals after June 18. Mary's Defence II is printed in Appendix III.

well as the criticisms against him?—He is a gentle graceful angelic being—too much the reverse of coarse natures to be relished by them— If he has not all the boasted energy of that vain creature *man* he has what is far better, a strength all his own, founded on the tenderness & sympathy he irresistibly excites. You see how cautious & cold I am in my expressions *to be printed*, in comparison with the real warmth that is obliged to find unworthy exit in cut & dried phrases—

I leave the last paragraph to your good judgement— The statements therein I know to be true—but if you think it as well not to attack the people of the Opera House cut it out— Velluti himself is thoroughly & reasonably disgusted, & will not again engage himself at the theatre— The omission will shorten the letter which you may think as well— Pray, pray get it in & so deeply oblige

Yours ever & truly

M W S.

[P.S.] Perhaps instead of cutting out all the last paragraph the omission might commence from the words *He had wished to have the rehearsals* since that which goes before is defence & not attack—and the facts ought to be known *Pero facciate voi siete Padrone!*

ADDRESS: To C. C. Clarke Esq. ORIGINAL: Luther A. Brewer Collection, University of Iowa; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. (4½ x 7¾ inches). The "Defence" is 2½ pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 263. To John Howard Payne\*

[Kentish Town] Friday [July 28, 1826]

Welcome to England to [*sic*], my dear Friend— I am in society & can only say these words I will write you by post immediately

Ys. Ever truly

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Boston Public Library; A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 264. To John Howard Payne

Kentish Town,  
July 29 [1826].

When your messenger came I could not write having people with me . . . thank you for the books . . . I intended to ask you to give me the vol. of L[ord] B[yron]'s works, see how our intentions coincide as I perceive that the copy of my foolish book destined for you *vous a manqué* [?]. You must allow me to replace the deficiency by exchanging your Paris Edition for my copy . . . I shall be glad, very glad to see you . . .

[P.S.] I am, they say, grown thinner. I am a year older than when you saw me last. Years until 50 improve a man, after a Miss is out of her teens, they only injure a woman.



ORIGINAL: Not traced; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. Owned by the Carnegie Book Shop, 105 East 59 St., New York, in September, 1938. (Catalogue No. 68, item 454.)  
UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Excerpt from Catalogue No. 68 (item 454) of Carnegie Book Shop.

265. *To Leigh Hunt*

Brighton. 12. August. 1826

My dearest Hunt

I write to you from an hill almost as high as Albaro—but oh how different! Figure to yourself the edge of a naked promontory, composed of a chalk soil without a tree or shrub—but before I describe further, I pause—supposing that you may have visited this bald & glaring spot—or if not, I am, if my very obtuse muse will permit me—about to write an article on my experiences here—which had I the graceful art *some* have of tricking out the same, would be amusing—it will comprise an account of an excursion we have made to Castle Goring—thro' a truly English Country—I mean in the best sense of the word—shady lanes—flowery hedges—wooded uplands—rich farms—& rose-bedeked Cottages—one village in particular so took our fancy that we mean at the expiration of another week, to leave the barrenness & expence of Brighton & to immure ourselves in a pretty little rural lodging in that same place. I will, if you see no objection, send my article to you, & you will contrive to get it inserted for me—in fact my scant purse makes me seriously intend to indite an article or two—if I can be sure that they will be inserted—but it is dispiriting & annoying to write on purpose not to be printed as our *friend* H. says. I have an idea of another article. I have been reading a book “The English in Italy” (pray tell me if you can, who it is by) very clever amusing & true— Lady Charlotte Bury has also written one on the same topic—& Lady Oxford too—I think of writing a criticism on these with a few anecdotes of my own as *sauce piquante*— Do you think it will do for the N[ew] M[onthly]?<sup>1</sup>—

I have seen no one here, for I have not yet called on the [Horace] Smiths. I shall however before we retreat to [Sunion]. Mrs. Cleveland (Jane's mother) leaves us tomorrow & we expect to [be] very tranquil— A little amusement to our task would be very acceptable—but since we cannot get that, we forge merriment out of dulness itself— You know my Janey's cheerful—gay & contented temper—I cannot be sorrowful while with her—& though with many thoughts to annoy me—I lose while with her the drear melancholy that for months has devoured me, & am as gay as herself. I cannot express to you the extreme gratitude I feel towards this darling girl, for the power she has over me of influencing me to happiness— Often when I have spent solitary hours in fruitless & unwise tears, one glance at her clear brow & glad smile

<sup>1</sup> Mary wrote this article, and it was published (anonymously) in the *Westminster Review*, October 1826, pages 325–41, under the title, “The English in Italy.” The article is a review of three books: Lord Normanby's *The English in Italy* (3 vols.), *Continental Adventures. A Novel* (3 vols.), and the *Diary of an Ennuyée*. Mary's review is well-written and interesting and parts of it are worth preserving. She mentions Vacca (then dead), and gives a good account of Sgricci and the three performances of his which she had attended. This part of the review is quoted in Letter 107, note 2.

has dismissed the *devils* & restored me to pleasurable feeling—She is in truth my all—my sole delight—the dear azure sky from which I—a sea of bitterness beneath—catch alien hues & shine reflecting her loveliness— This excessive feeling towards her has grown slowly, but is now a part of myself—and I live to all good & pleasure only thro' her—

How is Marianne? I fear that all has not gone as well with her as it ought; I am anxious to hear the result of her indisposition— How are the Gliddons—dear & good creatures—how very hard that they who knew so well how to appreciate their happiness & to turn good fortune to good account should be snatched from some of their chief pleasures. Yet while they still enjoy that best gift of heaven—the true *Gliddonic* cheerfulness & good humour, they cannot be so much to be pitied, as many better visited by fate— Nor in considering this peculiar & family *attribute* a special gift of the deity—would I detract from the merit of each & all of them in cultivating this donation—it is so easy to repine—so easy to accuse heaven earth & the laws of nature—so easy to waste in endless tears & dark grief—but to smile at ill luck & bear with unaltered brow hateful employments & care for tomorrow—*hic labor hoc opus est* (there is a piece of blueism for you—*true blue* with a false concord I fear—for I cannot remember the gender of *labor*) God bless them all & help their undertakings— I trust Anne will already have met with an artist who will appreciate her talent & put her in the right way— I am sure that she will succeed in that best & most amiable of all the arts.

I do not think that we shall exceed our time here— I trust that we shall find you on our next walk up the Hill as well as England has made you ever since your return—looking how unlike West's Florentine picture—how unlike when I first saw you in the Vale of Health—better & younger than either— [*One line deleted*] I scratch out because Marianne will laugh & you will think that I am flattering you—which she will not— I cannot pretend to say what were the looks of the black muzzled personage were, who first cried havoc & let slip the darts of little Cupid [*sic*—but certainly he is ten years younger than he was ten years ago—ten—no nine—is it not—when first, having imaged a kind of fair ruddy light haired radical—I saw in the bust & flower adorned parlour those dark deep eyes looking from under those wise brows— Basta poi— What more— Adieu—the last word of all—Addio—& then à riverderti—dear Italian—how I delight in your [*word missing; page torn*] paroletti — Carissimo Amico— Addio—pensi labotta [*MS torn*] con tutta quella bontà Jolita tua—e l'affezione dorenta a una che ti ama pur sempre

God bless you, embrace your children for me & give an especial kiss to Mary's pretty eyelids—& the smiling mouth of my Vincenzo— Occhi Turchini Marianne—is more mine than yours—by *your own confession*— Do you understand Marianne?—God bless you too dear girl—

Yours aff<sup>y</sup> my kind friends  
Mary Shelley

[P.S.] There are in James' St. here two neighbouring butchers one is called Venus & the other Myrtle—this is as bad as the consecration of the Jasmine—

I beg your pardon— I meant to have taken special care in writing to you that my y's were not g's<sup>2</sup>—but I write in haste & console myself with knowing that the worst will be a little laughing & quizzing which I do not dislike from friends & take no credit for my indifference—it may proceed from vanity—partly it proceeds from satisfaction that while you laugh nothing very bad is behind in the way of reprehension

ADDRESS: Leigh Hunt, Esq.—/ Cutbushy' Cottage/ Highgate. POSIMARKS. (1) Crawfords (2) 14.AU/ 1826 (3) 4.EVEN.4/ AU.14/ 1826. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2755); A.L.S., 6 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Letters*, 170–76. TEXT: From original letter.

## 266. To An Editor<sup>1</sup> (a fragment)

[c. October, 1826]

It is no doubt very kind in M. Palma (who is, we believe, a Piedmontese Lawyer) to give us information respecting our own countrymen—but the authority on which he heard that T[relawny] was maintained by L[ord] B[yron] must have been anything but good— The assertion is altogether unfounded. Mr. T. is a gentleman of ancient family (son of the late Col. T[relawny] B[rereton] from whom he inherited property sufficient to preserve him from the temptation of being dependant on any one—even if a remarkably generous & independant spirit w[oul]d not make this, under any circumstances the last accident that c[oul]d befall him. Parry—who is one of Count Palma's authorities, speaks of "half a dozen adventurers, such as Capt. T. and Mr. Humphreys." P[arry] must have given this word "Adventurer" a meaning different from that which Co[u]nt P[alma], whose knowledge of the E[nglish] language is not more accurate than his knowledge of E[nglish] characters, attributes to it— Adventurer is not always used by Englishmen as by Frenchmen—in the sense of a person without property or principle—seeking a livelihood by dishonest shifts—nor could it be applied to T.—to whomever else it may be applied— But what Parry means or says is of little consequence

ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley c.1, f.512); A.L. (unsigned), 2 pp. 8vo (4½ x 7¼ inches), a fragment. PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 95 (1937), 415. TEXT: From original MS.

<sup>2</sup> Mary's handwriting is usually singularly clear, but her y's and g's are sometimes confusing.

<sup>1</sup> This fragment is part of a letter written by Mary at the request of Trelawny, with the intention of sending it to the editor of some periodical. (See Trelawny's letter from Zante, Ionian Islands, August 25, 1826, *The Letters of Edward J. Trelawny*, 104–107.) Early in 1826 Count Alerino Palma, a Piedmontese exile living in England, printed his book entitled *Greece Vindicated*. In his critical remarks on William Parry's *The Last Days of Lord Byron* he quotes Parry (page 261): "Mr. Parry expresses himself thus toward the end: 'I say nothing of Colonel Stanhope empowering half a dozen adventurers, such as Captain Trelawny, Mr. Humphreys . . . to dispose of the Committee's stores.'" In a lengthy footnote on pages 261–62 Palma discusses Trelawny. He says in part: "I certainly have heard from good authority, that during Lord Byron's life, Trelawny was maintained by that nobleman."

267. *To Leigh Hunt*

5 Bartholomew Place,  
Kentish Town.  
30th October, 1826.

My dear Hunt,

Is it—or is it not right that these few lines should be addressed to you now? Yet if the subject be one, that you may judge better to have been deferred—set my *undelay* down to the account of over-zeal in wishing to relieve you from a part of the care, which I know is just now oppressing you:—too happy I shall be if you permit any act of mine to have that effect.

I told you long ago that our dear Shelley intended on rewriting his will to have left you a legacy; I think the sum mentioned was £2,000, I trust that hereafter you will not refuse to consider me your debtor for this sum, merely because I shall be bound to pay it you by the laws of honour, instead of a legal obligation.<sup>1</sup> You would of course have been better pleased to have received it immediately from dear Shelley's bequest—but as it is well known that he intended to make such an one it is in fact the same thing, and so I hope by you to be considered, besides your kind heart will receive pleasure from the knowledge that you are bestowing on me the greatest pleasure I am capable of receiving.

This is no resolution of today; but formed from the moment I knew my situation to be such as it is. I did not mention it, because it seemed almost like an empty vaunt, to talk and resolve of things so far off. But futurity approaches—and a feeling haunts me as if this futurity were not far distant. I have spoken vaguely to you on this subject before—but now, you having had a recent disappointment, I have thought it as well to inform you in express terms of the meaning I attached to my expressions. I have as yet made no will; but in the mean time, if I should chance to die, this present writing may serve as a legal document to prove that I give and bequeath to you the sum of two thousand pounds sterling. But I hope we shall both live—I to accomplish dear Shelley's intentions; you, to honour me so far as to permit me to be their executor.

I have mentioned this subject to no one; and do not intend; an act is not aided by words—especially an act unfulfilled. Nor does this letter, methinks, require any answer—at least not till after the death of Sir Timothy Shelley—when perhaps this explanation would have come with better grace—but I trust to your kindness to put my writing now to a good motive.

I am, my dear Hunt

Yours affectionately and obliged

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

<sup>1</sup> When Mary wrote this letter, she had not the slightest notion that Sir Timothy would live until 1844. By that time the affairs of the estate had so altered that Mary and Sir Percy Florence found it advisable to pay Hunt an annuity of £120 a year instead of giving him £2000 in a lump sum. (See Letter 576.)

ADDRESS: To Leigh Hunt Esq. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. (A copy is in the Stark Collection, University of Texas.) PRINTED: *Correspondence of Leigh Hunt*, I, 252-53; *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1081-82; Marshall, II, 151-52; *Letters*, 168-70. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

## 268. To Alaric A. Watts\*

Kentish Town

30 Oct. [1826]

Sir,

The absence of Mr. [David] Lyndsay from this country has occasioned considerable delay in his & my answer to your obliging letter. I now enclose you the packet, he has consigned to my care for you.

I have no small pieces either of my own or of Mr. Shelley's which I can offer you—and I am too much occupied at this moment to attempt the composition of any. The only MSS. I could offer you—are a prose tale which would about fill 9 pages, I should guess, of your work—and 2 short mythological dramas—on the subject of Proserpina & Midas—I would send these now; but I am convinced that your work must be too far advanced to allow the admission of pieces of their length. If you please you can have them that you may judge how far they will be admissible in your next years publication.<sup>1</sup>

I beg to return my thanks for the elegant little volume you have had the politeness to send me. I had of course seen it before—the plates are extremely beautiful, and superior to anything of the kind that I have seen.

I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Will you excuse me if I say that in consequence [of] my habit of withdrawing my name from public notice, I should be glad that my signature were not added to your interesting autographs.—

ADDRESS: Alaric Watts Esq/ &c &c &c. ORIGINAL: Owned by Maggs Brothers in July, 1937; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: (In part) Frederick L. Jones, "*Mary Shelley and Midas*," *London Times Literary Supplement* (June 25, 1938), 434. TEXT: From original letter.

## 269. To Henry Colburn

Kentish Town

Monday [? October 30, 1826]

Dear Sir

A friend of mine, Mr. David Lyndsay, who is now abroad, has written to me, requesting me to propose a work of his to you. You have of course heard

<sup>1</sup> Watts was editor of *The Literary Souvenir, or Cabinet of Poetry and Romance* (12 vols., 1825-37), an annual. Mary's and Lyndsay's contributions came too late for insertion. In the preface to the volume for 1827 Watts wrote (page xvi): "I have to regret that several highly interesting communications reached me too late to be included in the present volume. Among these are articles from . . . Mr. David Lyndsay, and the authors of . . . 'Frankenstein.'" In the volume for 1825 there are three pages of Autographs of Living Poets. *Proserpine* was finally published in another annual, *The Winter's Wreath* for 1832. *Midas* was not published until 1922 (edited by A. Koszul), although Mary made at least one more effort (in 1832) to get it published. See Letter 405.

of Mr. Lyndsay as the author of "Dramas of the Ancient World"<sup>1</sup>—and latterly of "Tales of the Wild and Wond[er]ful." The former work in particular met with considerable success & was highly spoken of in all literary circles—It is indeed a production of genius. His present work is of the same cast—though on even a more poetical plan. The title of some of the dramas will convey some idea of it "The Revolt of the Wilderness"—"The Festival of the Earth"—"The Wedding of Undine" &c &c The work is not yet complete, but Mr. Lyndsay informs me that it will be ready to send by the time he hears from me. If you should feel disposed to purchase this work he would be most happy to treat with you.

He begs me to add that he is already far advanced in a poetical translation of a German drama held in high estimation in Germany called *Der Tauber Liebe*—Magic Love. The name of the author (I think but he has forgotten to mention it) is Alarn. It is of the length of *Faust*, but Mr. Lyndsay intends somewhat to abridge it. He describes it as a poem of the highest imaginative order.

I shall be very glad if you should deem it fitting to enter into a negotiation with my friend—

I am, dear Sir,  
Your obt. Servant  
Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Henry Colburn Esq/ New Burlington St. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 20167); A.L.S., 3 pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 270. To Henry Colburn\*

Kentish Town  
Wednesday [1824-27]

Mrs. Shelley would be obliged to Mr. Colburn if he could send the books by the bearer, as she is at an actual stop for want of them.

ORIGINAL: Pierpont Morgan Library; A.L. (3rd person), 1 p. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 271. To John Howard Payne\*

Kentish Town  
22 Nov. [1826]

My dear Payne

You have not been tempted by fogs or mist or rain or mud and all the dear English variety of fine weather to come to Kentish Town. I write now to say that Mr. Hogg on coming to town asked me your address, I gave it him, the same as on this letter—but he was told that you were not there—tho'

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1822. Mary read the book on March 20, 1822, long before she knew Lyndsay personally. The *Tales* does not appear in the British Museum Catalogue. Apparently Colburn did not take either the volume of dramas or the translation.

my friend Jefferson has little truly of the appearance of that which William [Godwin Jr.] was mistaken for. His address is 1 Garden Court—Temple—so if you wish to renew your Paris acquaintance you can leave a card there.<sup>1</sup>

You are now I suppose in all the agonies of rehearsal— When crowned with triumph, you will, I trust come to receive my congratulations --

Yours ever truly

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Janey & I promise ourselves admissions for the Dame Blanche<sup>2</sup>—

ADDRESSED. J. Howard Payne Esq/ 27 Arundel St./ Strand. POSTMARKS: (1) 3/ (2) SO Kentish T<sup>n</sup>. ORIGINAL: Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection, the New York Public Library; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 272. To John Howard Payne

[Kentish Town, January 6, 1827]

My dear Payne

Since ever to see you again is past my hope I write to congratulate you on the success of the *White Maid*<sup>3</sup>—since tho' the newspapers shew their want of gallantry toward her—the public are I heare infinitely pleased. I long to see it—but I hear that you are not permitted many orders—and I can more patiently postpone my visit as this weather kills me— I have a very bad cold —& could not venture out till I or the weather change for the better— Nevertheless I hope you will not find it inconvenient to facilitate my acquaintance with the piece a week or so hence.

I want to hear if you have further intelligence concerning Murray's proposal concerning Mr. Shelley's works<sup>4</sup>— I believe the *family obstacles* will be obviated—and if Mr. Murray still entertains the idea—I should be glad that he should know that it is practicable *Can* you serve me, as you kindly said you *would* on this occasion

I really think a walk to Kentish Town would do you good— What say you? Will [you] drink tea with me Tuesday Evening?

Yours ever

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. POSTMARK: JA.6/ 1827 (faded through the missing envelope or wrapper on to MS beneath). UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> Payne had returned to England in October, 1826. According to Hogg's journal of his travels on the Continent (T. J. Hogg, *Two Hundred and Nine Days* [London, Hunt and Clarke, 1827, 2 vols.], II, 298–309), T. J. Hogg was in Paris during February 19–23, 1826. William Godwin, Jr., had evidently once been mistaken for a collector or an officer of the law.

<sup>2</sup> Payne's opera, *The White Maid* (an adaptation of Eugène Scribe's *La Dame Blanche*, 1825), was licensed on October 16, 1826, but not produced until Tuesday, January 2, 1827, at Covent Garden. (Nicoll, *A History of Early Nineteenth Century Drama*, II, 359.)

<sup>3</sup> See Letter 271, note 2.

<sup>4</sup> It would be interesting to know more about this proposal. Mary was probably overly optimistic about the "family obstacles."

273. *To John Murray*

[Kentish Town] January 13, 1827

I write merely to say that the copyrights [of Shelley's works] are mine, and that if you wisht to make such a purchase, I should be happy to enter into a negotiation with you upon it.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. It once was in the possession of John Murray, but the present Sir John Murray says that he does not have it. PRINTED: S. Smiles, *A Publisher and His Friends* (1891), II, 309 (quot., 4 lines). TEXT: From *ibid*.

274. *To [? Charles Ollier]\**

Kentish Town

16 Jan. [? 1827]

My dear Sir

I wrote to Mr. Colburn about ten days ago—offering to undertake the translation of a French work strongly recommended to me by Mr. Peacock—Thierry's *History of the Norman Conquest*<sup>1</sup>— I have had no answer— Does this mean that he declines my proposal?—

I have a work called *L'Osservatore Fiorentino*<sup>2</sup>—A work much esteemed in Italy—which contains a history of the principal buildings of Florence—with many curious anecdotes & interesting traditional stories about that City— In the Italian this work consists of 8 thin octavo volumes— For the English reader a judicious abridgement might be made in one volume forming an interesting work. Wont you mention it to Mr. Colburn—& let me know whether it would meet his views.

I suppose there is no chance now of his purchasing the copy right of *Frankenstein*

I am dear Sir

Yours truly

M Shelley

ORIGINAL: Chapin Collection, Williams College, Williamston, Mass.; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo (7 x 4 ¼ inches). Watermark: "HAGAR & SON 1826." UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy sent me by Lucy Eugenia Osborne, Custodian of the Collection.

275. *To John Howard Payne\**

Park Cottage [Paddington]

Monday [February 19, 1827]

What can I say to all this stupid *tracasserie* of Dame Fortune— Shall I play again & will you help me to win—suppose you get tickets for me (4) & places (6)—for Wednesday at the Lyceum—if you can let me have the former & hear of the latter at Papa's tomorrow evening (by 8)—if not then

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Nicholas Augustin Thierry, *Histoire de la Conquête de l'Angleterre par les Normands, de ses causes, et de ses suites jusqu'à nos jours* (Paris, 1825, 3 tom.).

<sup>2</sup> By Marco Lastri, Terza edizione (Firenze, 1821, 8 tom.). From this book (I, 119) Shelley drew the story for his *Ginevra*.



can you send them to me Wednesday morning— If this does not succeed the—— I leave you to finish the phrase pray do it energetically— I say amen

Yours

M S.

ADDRESS: J. H. Payne/ 29 Arundel St./ Strand. POSTMARK: 10.F.NOON.10/  
19.FE/ 1827. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 10793); A.L.S., 1 p. 8vo,  
with seal. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

## 276. *To Edward John Trelawny*<sup>1</sup>

Kentish Town, 4th March, 1827.

My dear Trelawny—

Your long silence had instilled into me the delusive hope that I should hear you sooner than from you. I have been silly enough sometimes to start at a knock,—at length your letter is come. [By] that indeed I entertain more reasonable hopes of seeing you. You will come— Ah, indeed you must; if you are ever the kind-hearted being you were—you must come to be consoled by my sympathy, exhilarated by my encouragements, and made happy by my friendship. You are not happy! Alas! who is that has a noble and generous nature? It is not only, my noble-hearted friend, that your will is bountiful and your means small,—were you richer you would still be tormented by ingratitude, caprice, and change. Yet I say Amen to all your anathema against poverty, it is beyond measure a torment and despair. I am poor, having once been richer; I live among the needy, and see only poverty around. I happen, as has always been my fate, to have formed intimate friendships with those who are great of soul, generous, and incapable of valuing money except for the good it may do—and these very people are all even poorer than myself, is it not hard? But turning to you who are dearest to me, who of all beings are most liberal, it makes me truly unhappy to find that you are hard pressed: do not talk of old age and poverty, both the one and the other are in truth far from you,—for the one it will be a miracle if you live to grow old,—this would appear a strange compliment if addressed to another, but you and I have too much of the pure spirit of fire in our souls to wish to live till the flickering beam waxes dim;—think then of the few present years only. I have no doubt you will do your fortunes great good by coming to this country. A too long absence destroys the interest that friends take, if they are only friends in the common acceptation of the word; and your relations ought to be reminded of you. The great fault to us in this country is its expensiveness, and the dreadful ills attendant here on poverty; elsewhere, though poor, you may live—here you are actually driven from life, and though a few might pity, none would help you were you absolutely starving. You say you shall stay here but a short time and then go to Italy—alas! alas!

<sup>1</sup> Mary's letter is an answer to Trelawny's letter dated Zante, December 16, 1826. See Marshall, II, 152–53.

It is impossible in a letter to communicate the exact state of one's feelings and affairs here—but there is a change at hand—I cannot guess whether for good or bad as far as regards me. This winter, whose extreme severity has carried off many old people, confined Sir Tim. for ten weeks by the gout—but he is recovered. All that time a settlement for me was delayed, although it was acknowledged that Percy now being the heir,<sup>2</sup> one ought to be made; at length after much parading, they have notified to me that I shall receive a magnificent £250 a year, to be increased next year to £300.<sup>3</sup> But then I am not permitted to leave this cloudy nook. My desire to get away is unchanged, and I used to look forward to your return as a period when I might contrive—but I fear there is no hope for me during Sir T.'s life. He and his family are now at Brighton. John Shelley, dear S[helley]'s brother, is about to marry, and talks of calling upon me. I am often led to reflect in life how people situated in a certain manner with regard to me might make my life less drear than it is—but it is always the case that the people that might—won't, and it is a very great mistake to fancy that they will. Such thoughts make me anxious to draw tighter the cords of sympathy and friendship which are so much more real than those of the world's forming in the way of relationship or connection.

From the ends of the world we were brought together to be friends till death; separated as we are, this tie still subsists. I do not wonder that you are out of heart concerning Greece; the mismanagement here is not less than the misgovernment there, the discord the same, save that here ink is spilt instead of blood. Lord Cochrane alone can assist them—but without vessels or money how can he acquire sufficient power? at any rate except as the Captain of a vessel I do not see what good you can do them. But the mischief is this,—that while some cold, unimpressive natures can go to a new country, reside among a few friends, enter into the interests of an intimate and live as a brother among them for a time, and then depart, leaving small trace, retaining none,—as if they had ascended from a bath, they change their garments and pass on;—while others of subtler nature receive into their very essences a part of those with whom they associate, and after a while they become enchained, either for better or worse, and during a series of years they bear the marks of change and attachment. These natures indeed are the purest and best, and of such are you, dear friend; having you once, I ever have you; losing you once, I have lost you for ever; a riddle this, but true. And so life passes, year is added to year, the word youth is becoming obsolete, while years bring me no change for the better. Yet I said, change is at hand—I know it, though as yet I do not feel it—you will come, in the spring you will come and add fresh delight for me to the happy change from winter to summer. I cannot tell what else material is to change, but I feel sure the year will end differently from its beginning. Jane

<sup>2</sup> Shelley's son and heir by Harriet, Charles Bysshe, died of tuberculosis at Field Place and was buried on September 16, 1826. Mary's son Percy Florence then became Shelley's heir.

<sup>3</sup> The increase to £300 did not occur until the June quarter of 1829.

is quite well, we talk continually of you, and expect you anxiously. Her fortunes have been more shifting than mine, and they are about to conclude,—differently from mine,—but I leave her to say what she thinks best concerning herself, though probably she will defer the explanation until your arrival.<sup>4</sup> She is my joy and consolation. I could never have survived my exile here but for her. Her amiable temper, cheerfulness, and never ceasing sympathy are all so much necessary value for one wounded and lost as I.

Come, dear friend, again I read your melancholy sentences and I say, come! let us try if we can work out good from ill; if I may not be able to throw a ray of sunshine on your path, at least I will lead you as best I may through the gloom. Believe me that all that belongs to you must be dear to me, and that I shall never forget all I owe to you.

Do you remember those pretty lines of Burns?—

A monarch may forget his crown  
That on his head an hour hath been,  
A bridegroom may forget his bride  
Who was his wedded wife yest'reen,  
A mother may forget her child  
That smiles so sweetly on her knee,  
But I'll remember thee, dear friend,  
And all that thou hast done for me.<sup>5</sup>

Such feelings are not the growth of the moment. They must have lived for years—have flourished in smiles, and retained their freshness watered by tears; to feel them one must have sailed much of life's voyage together—have undergone the same perils, and sympathised in the same fears and griefs; such is our situation; and the heartfelt and deep-rooted sentiments fill my eyes with tears as I think of you, dear friend, we shall meet soon. Adieu,

M. S.

[P.S.] . . . I cannot close this letter without saying a word about dear Hunt—yet that must be melancholy. To feed nine children is no small thing. His health has borne up pretty well hitherto, though his spirits sink. What is it in the soil of this green earth that is so ill adapted to the best of its sons? He speaks often of you with affection.

Direct to me at W. Godwin, Esq., 44 Gower Place, Gower Street, London.

ADDRESS: Edward Trelawny, Esq.,/ To the care of Samuel Barff, Esq.,/ Zante,  
The Ionian Isles. ENDORSED: Received 10th April, 1827. ORIGINAL: Not traced.  
PRINTED: Marshall, II, 153–57. TEXT: From *ibid*.

<sup>4</sup> Jane Williams united herself with T. J. Hogg in the spring or summer of 1827. A regular marriage was, of course, impossible.

<sup>5</sup> Last stanza of the "Lament for James, Earl of Glencairn."

277. *To John Howard Payne*

[March 30, 1827]

How goes the world with you? The smile she put on for me is now exchanged for a frown; but I expect the smile to return ere long.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Romance*, 97 (quotation only). TEXT: From *ibid.*

278. *To Edward John Trelawny*

[Kentish Town] Easter Sunday [April 8, 1827]

... This is to be an eventful summer to us. Janey is writing to you and will tell her own tale best. The person to whom she unites herself is one of my oldest friends, the early friend of my own Shelley. It was he who chose to share the honour, as he generously termed it, of Shelley's expulsion from Oxford. (And yet he is unlike what you may conceive to be the ideal of the best friend of Shelley.) He is a man of talent,—of wit,—he has sensibility and even romance in his disposition, but his exterior is composed and, at a superficial glance, cold. He has loved Jane devotedly and ardently since she first arrived in England, almost five years ago. At first she was too faithfully attached to the memory of Edward, nor was he exactly the being to satisfy her imagination; but his sincere and long-tried love has at last gained the day.

... Nor will I fear for her in the risk she must run when she confides her future happiness to another's constancy and good principles. He is a man of honour, he longs for home, for domestic life, and he well knows that none could make such so happy as Jane. He is liberal in his opinions, constant in his attachments, if she is happy with him now she will be always. . . . Of course after all that has passed it is our wish that all this shall be as little talked of as possible, the obscurity in which we have lived favours this. We shall remove hence during the summer, for of course we shall still continue near each other. I, as ever, must derive my only pleasure and solace from her society.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: Marshall, II, 165–66 (incomplete); Lucy M. Rossetti, *Mrs. Shelley* (1890), 179–80 (quots., and summary of whole letter). TEXT: From Marshall, II, 165–66.

279. *To Mrs. Bartlett\**Kentish Town  
19 May, 1827

My dear Mrs. Bartlett

I am sorry that the present object of my writing is to announce the necessity I am under of quitting Kentish Town. In about a month from the present time I leave town for the country<sup>1</sup>—and the period of my return is uncertain. Besides that family<sup>3</sup> reasons will I believe oblige me when I may return, to take up my residence quite at the other end of London.—

<sup>1</sup> She left Kentish Town for Sompting in the last week of July.

I had intended to defer this communication until I should pay you my debt—but as another week may elapse before the final arrangement of my affairs I am unwilling to give you so short a notice of my intention of leaving you. If any circumstances should make it convenient to you for me to quit you sooner I will endeavour to hasten my departure—otherwise I think in a month from this time I shall be obliged to quit town.—

I sincerely thank you for your politenesses towards me and your kindness to my little Boy. With the truest wishes for your health & happiness I am

Yours truly

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Mrs. Bartlett/ &c &c &c. ORIGINAL: Bodleian Library (MS Shelley Add. d.5, ff.99–100); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. PRINTED: *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, VIII, No. 95 (1937), 416. TEXT: From original letter.

## 280. *To Sir Timothy Shelley*\*<sup>1</sup>

Kentish Town,  
29 May, 1827.

Sir,

It is the subject of great anxiety to me that the period of my signing the deed drawn by Mr. Whitton is again delayed,—and I am the more mortified since it appears that this delay is occasioned by a communication of mine. When Mr. Whitton proposed to me that on the contingency of my inheriting on Bysshe's will, I should repay the sums advanced and to be advanced by you to me and my child, I immediately acceded to this arrangement as being just and proper. Mr. Whitton wished that the deed he should draw, should be seen and approved by a Solicitor on my part. Mr. Peacock named Mr. Amory, and Mr. Whitton was satisfied with this nomination. As soon as the affair was put into the hands of a Solicitor, I of course considered myself obliged to act under his directions, and in consequence of Mr. Amory's objections all this delay has occurred.

For myself, I do not hesitate to say that I put every confidence in you, Sir Timothy, and that I feel perfectly secure that my interests are safe in your hands, and I am ready to confide them to your direction. It is hard therefore that while I am satisfied with the arrangements you make, that the objections of my advisers should subject me to the dreadful embarrassments with which I am now struggling. It was in February last that Mr. Whitton announced to me your intention of allowing me £250 p. ann. since then I have received no supply— I have lived on credit—the bills incurred are now presented for

<sup>1</sup> As Mary's letter of June 4 shows, Whitton did not send this letter to Sir Timothy. Ingpen (*Shelley in England*, 594) is mistaken in saying that Peacock wrote and Mary merely copied the letter. It was the letter to Amory ("that letter") which Peacock drafted and which suggested to Sir Timothy, to whom evidently a copy in Mary's hand was sent, a Chancery suit. (See Letter 282.)

payment, and neither have I funds to defray them, nor any by which I can continue to exist.

I do not understand business; and I do not mean to bring this subject before you as a question of business. The interest you shewed for my son encouraged me in the hope that you also will be desirous of facilitating my earnest wish of bringing him up properly. As by Bysshe's confidence in me I inherit a considerable property I consider it perfectly right that I should repay the sums you advance to me for his support—but the means for his support I can only obtain through you. I am sure that you will not permit a question of forms merely to interfere with the welfare of your Grandson and the respectability of his Mother. It is a great misfortune to me that I am not permitted to see you.<sup>2</sup> It would have been a great happiness to me, if, left a widow, I could have been under the protection of Bysshe's father. This good is denied to me; but let me entreat you to enter into my situation, and not to delay in relieving me from the humiliations and distresses to which I am subjected. I believe that Mr. Whitton feels assured that confidence may be safely placed in me and will not advise any further postponement in the desired settlement.

Let me entreat you therefore, Sir Timothy, to direct that the deed in question may be immediately prepared for my signature. Every day is of consequence to me; your kind feelings will I do not doubt, cause as few to intervene as possible before I am relieved from my embarrassments.

Percy is quite well, and often speaks of you; I hope it will not be long before he has the honour of seeing you again.

I am,

Your obliged and obt. Servant,  
Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: Sir Tim Shelley Bart. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 594–96. TEXT: Copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

281. *To William Whitton*

Kentish Town.  
29 May, 1827.

Dear Sir,

I enclose you my letter to Sir Tim. and reiterate my request that you will have the goodness to use your influence with my father-in-law to bring this painful affair to a conclusion. I feel assured that you are persuaded that confidence may be placed in me—and on my part I am ready to put every confidence in Sir Timothy.

I am, Sir,

Yr. Obt. Servant,  
Mary Shelley

<sup>2</sup> Mary made many attempts to gain a personal interview with Sir Timothy, but never succeeded.

ADDRESS: W. Whitton Esq. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

282. *To William Whitton\**

Kentish Town,  
4th June, 1827.

Sir,

I am sorry that my letter to Sir Timy. Shelley is not satisfactory. I beg you will attribute my failure to my utter ignorance of business—and my not knowing exactly what it was necessary that I should say. I thought that when I expressed my perfect confidence in Sir Timy., and my readiness to sign the deed in question, that I should efface any disagreeable impression made by my letter to Mr. Amory. The explanation of that letter<sup>1</sup> is simple. I had, at your wish, confided the conduct of my affairs to Mr. Peacock. I copied the letter—which certainly when he composed he had no intention it should contain any expressions offensive to Sir T. Shelley. You told me that it conveyed the idea that a foundation was to be laid by it for a suit in Chancery— I am sorry that it should have been so ill worded— I utterly disclaim any such intention or thought on my part. I beg to retract any expressions that could give rise to such an idea, or that detract at all from the perfect confidence I feel in Sir Timothy.

I trust that my present communication fills up any omission in my last. If not, and if you will let me know that such is the case, I will call on you at any hour you will appoint that I may learn by what act or word of mine I can bring this painful negotiation to a conclusion.

I am most anxious to make the required concessions and to sign the deed — My situation is one of struggle and embarrassment— Besides the debts I have been obliged to incur—I made arrangements (when on the interview of Sir. Timy. with Mess. Peacock and Amory, I thought the negotiation on the eve of terminating) to quit Kentish Town. I cannot delay my departure more than a fortnight or three weeks—and yet without money I cannot discharge my bills here. Permit me to request as a personal favour to myself that you kindly use your influence with Sir Timy., and as speedily as circumstances will permit, make such communication to him as will bring this distressing delay to a termination.

May I be allowed to ask what the circumstance is to which you allude as having occurred in Sir Tim's family.

I am, Sir,

Your Obt. Servt.

Mary W. Shelley

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 596–98. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

<sup>1</sup> To Amory, her solicitor.

Mary W. Shelley

JULY 24, 1827 : 284

283. *To Mary Lamb*<sup>1</sup>

Kentish Town,  
22nd July, 1827.

My dear Miss Lamb,

You have been long at Enfield— I hardly know yet whether you are returned—and I quit town so very soon that I have not time to—as I exceedingly wish—call on you before I go. Nevertheless believe (if such familiar expression be not unmeet from me) that I love you with all my heart—gratefully and sincerely—and that when I return I shall seek you with, I hope, not too much zeal—but it will be with great eagerness.

You will be glad to hear that I have every reason to believe that the worst of my pecuniary troubles are over—as I am promised a regular tho' small income from my father-in-law. I mean to be very industrious *on other accounts* this summer, so I hope nothing will go very ill with me or mine.

I am afraid Miss Kelly<sup>2</sup> will think me dreadfully rude for not having availed myself of her kind invitation. Will you present my compliments to her, and say that my embarrassments, harassings and distance from town are the guilty causes of my omission—for which with her leave I will apologize in person on my return to London.

All kind and grateful remembrances to Mr. Lamb, he must not forget me nor like me one atom less than I delight to flatter myself he does now, when again I come to seize a dinner perforce at your cottage. Percy is quite well—and is reading with great extacy the *Arabian Nights*. I shall return I suppose some one day in September. God bless you.

Yours affectionately,

Mary W. Shelley.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Letters of Charles and Mary Lamb* (1935), edited by E. V. Lucas, III, 111. TEXT: From *ibid*.

284. *To John Howard Payne*

[July 24, 1827]

Adieu for a few weeks. I hope to be in better spirits when I see you again,—and that some good fortune will attend us both. Take care of yourself, and preserve for me the friendly kindness you have ever shown.

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: *Romance*, 97–98 (incomplete). TEXT: From *ibid*.

<sup>1</sup> To this letter Lamb himself replied on July 26 with one of his most delightful letters. See *The Letters of Charles Lamb*, edited by E. V. Lucas (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1935), III, 109–11. The Lambs had returned from Enfield by the nineteenth. In September they took a house there.

<sup>2</sup> Frances Maria Kelly, actress and singer, to whom Lamb proposed (by letter) on July 20, 1819.



285. *To William Whitton*

at Mrs. Bury's  
Sompting near Shoreham, Sussex.  
15 August, 1827.

Sir,

I should not write so soon, but that I fear, that if I deferred, my letter would not find you in Town. I am for the present in a country lodging where of course credit is out of the question, and the most serious consequences would ensue from any delay in my quarterly allowance. According to the arrangement you were so kind to make, on the First of September one will be due to me. Shall I before hand send up a receipt in the form you will dictate—and will you as soon as due, either be so good as to enclose a cheque to Mr. Peacock or send me a bill on a Brighton Banker. Excuse the anxiety I must naturally feel on the subject, when punctuality in receiving this payment, is my only resource for life.

May I ask how Sir Timothy is—and if his spirits have recovered the late dreadful shock?—When you see or write to him, I should feel extremely obliged to you if you would express from me my grateful thanks for his attentions to my poor boy and his kindness towards myself.

Percy is very well indeed— The fresh country air and sea baths have added to his look of perfect health. This makes me the less regret a short delay in putting him to school. Mr. Peacock has meanwhile promised to make enquiries concerning one. My plan is that it should be at a short distance from town and that I should reside close to it—this will be quite necessary at first while he is a day scholar—and afterwards I should not choose to be at any distance from him.—

I am sure your sense of my unprotected situation will lead you readily to excuse my troubling you—and I feel secure that you will add to the obligations I already owe you, that of a speedy and favourable answer.

I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,  
Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: William Whitton Esq./ King's Road,/ Bedford Row,/ London. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 598–99 (quot., 12 lines). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

286. *To William Whitton\**

Sompting,  
2 September, 1827.

Sir,

I am very sorry to be obliged to annoy you by another letter—but having been obliged to yield my lodgings to some other persons I must send you my new address— I remove to Arundel tomorrow—and my direction will be at Mrs. Cooper's Tarrant St. Arundel— This unexpected circumstance

will render any delay of my allowance doubly distressing to me. Meanwhile permit me to apologize for the trouble I occasion you— Percy is perfectly well, and if there be any good school in Arundel he will go to it.

I am,

Yrs. Obediently,

Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: To be forwarded/ William Whitton Esq./ Kings Road,/ Bedford Row,/ London. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

287. *To William Whitton\**

Arundel,

7th September, 1827.

Sir,

I have received and must thank you for the cheque for £62. 10. 0.— I should not have troubled you, but that it was necessary I should inform you of my address. When I return to town I will communicate my arrival to you.

I am, Sir,

Your Ob.

Mary W. Shelley

ADDRESS: W. Whitton Esq./ Stone Wall,/ Tonbridge. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

288. *To John Howard Payne\**

Arundel. 9. September [1827]

What will you say, dear Friend, that I take you at your word, and give you another commission? Did I not believe that you would forgive me readily—& indeed not be angry at all, I should not have the courage to ask as it is I am more than half ashamed. The matter is simply this— I understand that the Countess Guiccioli has sent me some papers thro' the principal servant of Mr. Lambton—which I have never received, & I want to write about them, but do not know where— Would you permit your Mercury to call at Mr. Lambton's 6 Cleveland Row, St. James and to ask whether that gentleman is in town, & where he is—send immediately as he may any or every day return to the Continent—but let your person simply ask the above questions, & on no account mention my name— I have a very particular reason for this—it would annoy me greatly, if my name were mentioned.—

A thousand apologies are due to you—I have not time for one—only this—come & receive them here—come to the sweet woods of Arundel and come and see her who is always

Yours truly & obliged

M S

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq/ 29 Arundel St./ Strand— London. POST-MARKS: (1) ARUNDEL/ o62o (2) F/ 10 SE 10/ 1827. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6828); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to, with seal. PRINTED: *Romance*, 96–97. TEXT: From original letter.

289. *To John Howard Payne\**

Brighton

[Tuesday] 25 September [1827]

My dear Payne

You will be surprised to hear that I make one of the party in question—My friends remain at Dieppe a month before they proceed to Paris, and they have persuaded me to pass that month with them— Say nothing of all this to my people—& if they tell you any thing let it pass current<sup>1</sup>—

Our party consists—of Mrs. Shelley & child—which fair person I need not describe to you & whose signature will accompany this letter but lest you should believe that so divine a being could not be personated by another I subjoin two other signatures for your choice. Mrs. Douglas is short, i.e. an atom shorter than I—dark, pretty with large dark eyes & hair curled in the neck—Mr. Douglas is my height—slim—dark with curly black hair—the passport must be drawn out for Mr. & Mrs. Sholto Douglas<sup>2</sup>—Mrs. Carter & her two children—boys one ten the other nine—Mrs. Percy Shelley and boy—

We go early next week—Monday if possible from Brighton—to Dieppe—if there is any trouble about the passport let me know directly as in that case we will procure it here—send it to me to Arundel where we shall be till the day of our departure perhaps you had better send it by coach—the Royal Sussex sets off at half past eight on Monday Wednesday & Friday from the Silver Cross Charing Cross—it ought to come to us on Friday— Other Arundel [coaches] (Little Hampton or Bognor, passing thro' Arundel) go from other places I doubt not daily—our address is at Mrs. Cooper's Tarrant St. Arundel— Send me a letter the evening before by post to say I must expect it—but if the letter passport enclosed wd only be charged double—or even treble send it by post.—

We shall meet again in November—& I shall be delighted to think that I can bestow a little pleasure where so much is so due— You are the most disinterested of persons the rarest & best praise—

Ever Yours

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] I return to [Arund]el tonight—

ADDRESS: J. Howard Payne Esq./ 29 Arundel St. London/ Strand. POSTMARKS:  
(1) BRIGHTON/ SE 25/ 1827/55 (2) A/26 SE 26/ [182]7. ORIGINAL:  
Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; A.L.S., 3pp. 4to. UNPRINTED  
and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

290. *To John Howard Payne\**

Arundel—[Monday] 1 October [1827]

My friends entreat you, dear Payne, to accept their thanks— They feel

<sup>1</sup> On October 1 Mary wrote her father about the trip to Dieppe. He replied with considerable alarm on October 9. See his letter in Marshall, II, 182–83.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Sholto Douglas (*née* Isabel Robinson).

that I am the person who ought to be most pleased by your kindness—but they hope nevertheless that you will permit them to be grateful to you for your politeness. All seems admirably managed—and the double of my pretty friend deserves infinite praise—the signature alone is a miracle, & whoever she is, pray say, that we are all indebted to her.

You have written to me several times about these commissions of mine—but besides this you owe me a letter concerning yourself. Your health—your plans—your success—do not omit to inform me of all— You are so good that you have many friends—yet not one who sympathizes more truly than I in your pleasures & sorrows.

Percy has been indisposed, so we have deferred our voyage until next Saturday. God grant us a quiet passage— Once you called me an heroine in friendship—now I am one indeed—to cross the odious sea for the sake of my pretty Isabel [Douglas]—sacrifices have been made—as for instance by Damon & Pythias—but this in my tablets will stand above all the rest—a matchless example of fortitude, generosity—friendship and undaunted courage—pray praise me for I deserve it.

Adieu believe me Affectionately Yours

Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: John Howard Payne Esq/ 29 Arundel St./ Strand. POSTMARKS: (1) T.P./ Drury Lane (2) 12.NOON.12/ 2.OC/ 1827. ORIGINAL: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

291. *To John Howard Payne\**

Harrow—Monday [? November, 1827]

My dear Payne

Me voila en Londres—et me voila encore troubling you— Will you direct the enclosed to the American Consul General in London (is it not Col. Aspiwall) & send it to him by the 2d. post—un plus vite possible—

I am as yet at a friend's house, wholly unsettled—the moment I have a roof of my own over my head, I trust you will call, for I long to see you, & thank you for all your kindness

Yours Ever

Mary Shelley

Direct to me at

29 Northumberland St. New Road

ORIGINAL: Harvard University Library; A.L.S., 1 p. small 4to. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

292. To Robert Dale Owen<sup>\*1</sup>51 George St. Portman Sq  
9 Nov. [1827]

Dear Nashobite—

I send you a letter for our admirable & dear Fanny [Wright].<sup>2</sup> As this is foreign post day, a letter may arrive for her at N. St.—which I will either send to you at Bedford Square—or to Liverpool—so pray, [ ], do not forget to call at the Post Office [at] Liverpool, both tomorrow & on Sunday, for I shall direct there any thing I have to send for you.—

Take care of our Fanny, dear Dale—she is neither so independent or so fearless as you think—a thousand painful circumstances may surround her, in which you may be useful to her, and which you will not discover, unless you rouse yourself to perpetual attention, & resolve to devote yourself to those minute cares for her, which will win her confidence. You will say perhaps that if she confides not in you, the secretiveness is hers.—not so—we must all be sure of sympathy before we confide at all—and a woman must very highly esteem & love a man before she can tell any of her heart's secrets to him. We have no very excessive opinion of men's sympathetic and self sacrificing qualities—make yourself an exception—Inspire a belief in your lively & active interest for her— You are not in love now—one day you will be again—and the time may come when in spite of self-esteem you may fear that you are not loved in return— Now then practice yourself in such lessons as may make you *loveable*, if I may so express myself—and therefore the more likely to make a favourable impression— Nothing is better calculated to instil sweetness of disposition, & that best & most endearing of qualities—tenderness, than constant attention to a woman, with whom if you are not in love, yet for whom you have affection and kindness— Study to please Fanny in all minutia—divine her uneasinesses & be ever ready at her side with brotherly protection—do not imagine that she is capable always of taking care of herself:—she is certainly more than any woman, but we have all in us—and she is too sensitive & feminine not largely to partake in this inherent part of us—a desire to find a manly spirit whereon [to] lean—a manly arm to protect & shelter us— The time perhaps is not far off when Fanny may find in a lover these necessities better supplied than you can supply them—but till then, no man need be nearer—dearer or more useful to her than yourself—and every smile from her sweet lips, will not only be in itself a dear reward—but will assure you that you are becoming more & more capable of inspiring the best being that exists

<sup>1</sup> Robert Dale Owen (1801–1877), son of Robert Owen, the Scottish reformer and philanthropist, spent most of his life in the United States of America. After the failure of the New Harmony experiment, in which he was associated with Fanny Wright (see Frances Darusmont in *D.N.B.*), he settled in Indiana and entered into public affairs. He became a member of the state legislature, and then of the United States House of Representatives, where he held responsible committee appointments. He wrote many books on public affairs and on spiritualism.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Wright first wrote Mary from Paris on August 22. They probably met in London early in November after Mary's return from Dieppe. For Fanny Wright's letters to Mary and a discussion of the relationship of these two women, see Marshall, II, 168–81.

—a lofty minded, sensitive and talented woman—with love & devotion for you. I trust that you will find such an one & that thus your happiness will be secured— God help you— May you have favourable winds and a pleasant passage—speak of me at Nashoba—& do not let Fanny forget me

Your sincere Friend

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] Have you called at Power's for me? Mention again to Mr. Walker the book for Papa.

ORIGINAL: Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; A.L.S., 4 pp. 8vo. (Erroneously dated 1828 in another hand.) PRINTED: R. W. Leopold, *Robert Dale Owen* (1940), 52 (about half). TEXT: From original letter.

293. *To William Whitton\**

51 George St., Portman Sq.,  
3 December, 1827.

Dear Sir,

I returned to town about a month ago. I am happy to inform you that my Son is quite well—and both improved and grown since Sir Timothy saw him.

I am, Sir,

Your Obn. Serv.,

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

294. *To George W. Portman\**

Saturday 5 Jany. [? 1828]<sup>1</sup>

Dear Sir

I am sorry on your account that I cannot comply with the polite request of the Proprietors of the Ladies Museum.<sup>2</sup> It has been my constant endeavor to withdraw myself personally from public notice—and I flatter myself that I have so far succeeded as to be quite sure that the portrait of so insignificant a person would possess no attraction for the numerous readers of the Magazine. As to a Memoir, as my sex has precluded all idea of my fulfilling public employments, I do not see what the public have to do with me— I am a great enemy to the prevailing custom of dragging private life before the world, taking the matter generally—and with regard to myself there is no greater annoyance than in any way to be brought out of my proper sphere of private obscurity. You say you will be gratified in meeting my wishes on the occasion.—I should consider myself very greatly obliged to you if you would use your influence to prevent my name from appearing at all in print.

<sup>1</sup> The only possible years (unless the day of the week or the month is wrong) are 1828, 1833, and 1839. The watermark indicates 1828.

<sup>2</sup> *The Lady's Monthly Museum* (1798–1832); new series in 1815 and title altered to *The Ladies' Monthly Museum*; in 1830, changed to *The Ladies' Museum*; another new series in 1831.

I thank you for your politeness      I am  
 Your Obt. Servant  
 Mary Shelley

ADDRESSED: George W. Portman Esq. ORIGINAL: A.L.S., 2 pp. 12 mo (paper watermarked 1826); owned in April, 1940, by Michael Papantonio, New York. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Michael Papantonio.

## 295. To John Howard Payne\*

51 George St.

Thursday Ev<sup>ng</sup> [February 7, 1828]

Your heart, my most kind friend, is quick in making discoveries—and it is beyond measure generous in its sympathies—the feeling is delicate that dictated your note, and I am truly sensible to all its demonstrations—alas, mine are not fresh bad spirits—the same cause that occasioned me such dejection last summer is now operating in full force.<sup>1</sup>— It is little to tell you (tho' this is true) that I am much better tonight than yesterday—for tomorrow—I dread tomorrow—some day I may tell you the cause of my sorrow, but I shrink from talking of it—& would fain bury it in oblivion— It is now approaching a crisis, and I expect to experience great agitation— I know not whether agitation is to others what it is to me—to me it is bodily torture—I writhe—& long for physical pain as an antidote—to be sure I now get that as a surcroit—for, what was not the case a few years ago, my mind diseased diseases my luckless framework—

All this, dear Payne, will make you wonder—pity—& love me—would you could do me any good—for then I should get rid of a part of my evils—but it cannot be—I must bear alone—

I will write to you soon again to let you know how I am—meanwhile you need not be jealous, no *man-person* occasions my annoyance—but I believe I was born to run through every *key* of sorrow—and my heart fails me both in retrospect & anticipation

I will write very soon again—a thousand heartfelt thanks for your affectionate attentions

Ever yours

M S

<sup>1</sup> In July, 1827, shortly after her union with Hogg, Jane Williams told tales about Mary's failure as Shelley's wife and of Shelley's affection for her (Jane). These tales were reported to Mary, who, because she had idolized Jane, was almost crushed by her friend's treachery. Mary's journal for July 13, 1827, read: "My friend has proved false and treacherous! Miserable discovery. For four years I was devoted to her, and I earned only ingratitude. Not for worlds would I attempt to transfer the deathly blackness of my meditations to these pages. Let no trace remain save the deep bleeding hidden wound of my lost heart."—*Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1092. Matters reached a crisis in February, 1828. Mary wrote in her journal for Tuesday, February 12, 1828, that on the preceding day, by Thomas Moore's advice, "I disclosed my discoveries to Jane. . . . She is horror-struck and miserable at losing my friendship; and yet how unpardonably she trifled with my feelings, and made me all falsely a fable to others."—Marshall, II, 186. Mary never broke completely with Jane, but to the end of her life maintained their friendship. It cannot be doubted, however, that the illusion of Jane's perfection once shattered, Mary was never again able to worship Jane as she had done since 1822. As Mary's later letters show, Jane's life with Hogg was far from an entirely happy one. See Letter 312.

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6827); A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 95–96. TEXT: From original letter.

296. *To John Howard Payne*

[London, February, 1828]

Detestable as your annoyances are, my dear Friend, I shall hail them as fortunate (when over) if they free you from the discomfort of avoiding them for ever— I shall be anxious, very anxious, to hear the result of your endeavours—pray let me know—

I should like to go to Otello—if you can manage orders—but do not tease yourself— Are you half laughing at me when you speak of my “elegant & distressing note”— I would willingly bid farewell to such elegance for ever — Like all human things (unlike romantic sorrows) there is no finale to put an end at once to my annoyances—I look forward with fear & pain—but cannot see the remedy

Let me hear concerning your affairs the moment you have news to communicate—

I should like to receive the *yes* or *no* of the tickets as soon as possible for the arrangement of those who are to go with me.

Affectionately ys.

M S

ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 6825); A.L.S., 2 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: *Romance*, 93–94. TEXT: From original letter.

297. *To Jane Williams Hogg\**

[London] Thursday morning [February 14, 1828]

Since Monday I have been ceaselessly occupied by the scene, begun and interrupted, which filled me with a pain, that now thrills me as I revert to it— I then strove to speak, but your tears overcame me, while the struggle must have given me an appearance of coldness— Often—how often have I wept at instances of want of affection from you, and that you should complain of me, seemed the reproach of a benefactress to an ingrate.

If I revert to my devotion to you it is to prove that no worldly motives could estrange me from the partner of my miseries—the sweet girl whose beauty, grace and gentleness were to me so long the sole charms of my life— Often leaving you at Kentish Town I have wept from the overflow of affection— often thanked God who had given you to me—could any but yourself have destroyed such engrossing and passionate love? And what are the consequences of the change?—When I first heard that you did not love me—every hope of my life deserted me—the depression I sunk under, and to which I am now a prey, undermines my health— How many many hours this dreary winter, I have paced my solitary room driven nearly to madness, as I could not expel from my mind the memories of harrowing import that one after another in-



truded themselves— It was not long ago that eagerly desiring death—tho' death should only be oblivion, I thought that how to purchase oblivion of what was revealed to me last July a tortuous death would be a bed of roses. At least, most lovely one, my love for you was not unworthy of its object— I have committed many faults—the remorse of love haunts me often and brings bitter tears to my eyes—but for four years I committed not one fault towards you. In larger, in minute things, your pleasure and satisfaction were my objects, and I gave up everything, that is, all the very little I could give up, to them— I make no boast, heaven knows—had you loved me you were worth all—more than all the idolatry with which my heart so fondly regarded you.

Do not ask me, I beseech you, a detail of the revelations made me— Some of those most painful, you made to several—others of less import, but which tended more perhaps than the more important, to shew that you loved me not, were made only to two. I could not write of these, far less speak of them. If any doubt remain on your mind as to what I know, write to Isabel and she will inform you of the extent of her communications to me. I have been an altered being since then—long I thought that almost a death blow was given so heavily and unremittingly did the thought press on and sting me—but one lives on through all, to be a wreck.

Though I was conscious that having spoken of me as you did, you could not love me, I could not easily detach myself from the atmosphere of light and beauty that for ever surrounds you—[? now] I tried to keep you, feeling the while that I had lost you—but you penetrated the change, and I owe it to you not to disguise its cause— What will become of us, my poor girl—you say you love me—I heard you say so—such a speech a year ago would have been Elysium—then your expressions concerning me had not love in them.

Do not think that I am not fully aware of the defects on my part that might well call forth your reprehension—or that I even do not appreciate your motives in trying for my sake to be my friend, when I really believe I was a burthen to you— Nay I see your natural goodness in the very shew of love towards me, that you deigned to assume—but the veil is torn now— I believe you still and forever to be all that man or woman could desire as a lover or a friend, if you loved them, your very merits make my unhappiness—my sole claim on you was the entireness of my affection for you.

This explains my estrangement—how hateful I must have appeared to you all this time— While with you I was solely occupied by endeavouring not to think or feel—for had I done either—I should not have been so calm as I dare say I appeared— My first wish is to get out of a world where I have fabricated only misery for myself—my next to withdraw myself from all society— Nothing but my father could have drawn me to town again—his claims only prevent me now from burying myself in the country— I have known no peace since July— I never expect to know it again.

Were I to say, forget me—what will you reply? I cannot forget you, your

form, in all its endearing grace, is now before me—but more than ever, I can only be an object of distaste to you, is it not best then that you forget me?

Unhappy M. S.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: *Shelley and Mary*, IV, 1107–09; Marshall, II, 186–87 (both incomplete). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

298. *To John Murray*<sup>1</sup>

51 George St. Portman Sq.  
19 Feby., 1828

Dear Sir

I beg to acknowledge with many thanks the advance of £100 I have received from you through Mr. Marshall. With regard to my novel<sup>2</sup> I shall be much pleased if you will undertake its publication.—An historical subject of former times must be treated in a way that affords no scope for *opinion*, and I think you will have no reason to object to it on that score.

Mr. Marshall mentioned to me that you asked whether I understood Italian & its patois, saying that you had a view in asking this. I lived nearly six years in Italy & its language is perfectly familiar to me—and I should not hesitate to undertake a work that required an intimate acquaintance with it.—I should be very glad if you would communicate your ideas to me on this subject and happy to comply with your suggestions as far as my abilities permit— Shall I call again in Albermarle St. I shall be earnest to acquit myself of my debt to you.

I am Sir

Your Obt. Servt.

Mary Shelley

[P.S.] I received Mr. Gifford's edition of Ford<sup>3</sup> and Lord Byron's works for which I beg sincerely to thank you.—

ORIGINAL: Sir John Murray; A.L.S., 3 pp. 8vo. PRINTED: S. Smiles, *A Publisher and His Friends* (1891), II, 310 (quot., 12 lines). TEXT: From original letter.

<sup>1</sup> This is the first of a considerable number of letters to John Murray, which, as a whole, form probably the most pitiful portion of Mary's correspondence. Her introduction to Murray was through Thomas Moore, who was now seriously engaged with his *Life of Byron* and who constantly sought Mary's assistance, which she gave eagerly and in abundance. Murray had no real interest in Mary, who for years suffered under the illusion that the fashionable publisher would purchase some of the products of her pen—novels, articles, translations, histories. To induce him to employ her, Mary came nearer to abject begging than at any other time of her life. It is quite clear that Murray would have terminated his connection with Mary at once had she not been extremely useful to Moore. The loan of £100 was made upon Moore's recommendation. Murray was quite willing to cancel it in consideration of her contributions to Byron's *Life*; but Mary would not consent, having determined never to profit financially by her connection with Byron, as so many others had done. Whether the loan was ever repaid is not known. Murray was generous enough in sending Mary books and in doing odd favors. But he never purchased a line of her writing.

<sup>2</sup> *Perkin Warbeck*, published in March, 1830, by Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley.

<sup>3</sup> *The Works of John Ford*, edited by William Gifford, 1827.

299. *To William Whitton\**

51 George St., Portman Sq.,  
Monday, 10 March, 1828.

Mrs. Shelley will do herself the pleasure of calling on Mr. Whitton with her son on Wednesday morning at twelve o'clock.

ADDRESS: W. Whitton Esq./ Kings Road,/ Bedford Row. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

300. *To Vincent Novello*<sup>1</sup>

[London] 11 March, 1828.

Sometime ago, my dear Vincenzo, I promised you this tress of my mother's hair; I have not forgotten my promise, and you have not forgotten me, I am very sure. The present which I send you will therefore remind you pleasantly of her who ever loves her friends, among whom she trusts always to find you whatever circumstances may divide us.

Be happy, and preserve for me at least your esteem, this is the prayer of your true friend,

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Not traced. PRINTED: (Italian text) Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, *Recollections of Writers* (1878), 42. (Translation) Moore, *Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, 302 (dated 1826). TEXTS: Italian and English texts from sources above.

301. *To William Whitton\**

51 George St., Portman Sq.,  
14 March, 1828.

My dear Sir,

I walked over to Kensington today to see Mr. Slater's school.<sup>2</sup> From all I have heard of it and from personal inspection, I am inclined to select it for my son. The terms are 45£ per ann. There will be a few extras, books, &c.—and some things I must provide for him before he goes— His present school is by no means an inexpensive one— I trust therefore I am not indiscreet in asking you to represent this to Sir Timothy, and to mention that I shall find

<sup>1</sup> The Italian text of the original letter is as follows:

11 March, 1828.

Tempo fa, mio caro Vincenzo, vi promisi questa treccia dei capelli della mia Madre—non mi son scordata della mia promessa e voi non vi siete scordato di me—sono sicurissima. Il regalo presente adunque vi farà rammentare piacevolmente lei chi ama per sempre i' suoi amici—fra di quali crederà di sempre trovarvi quantunque le circostanze ci dividono.

State felice—e conservatemi almeno la vostra stima,  
vi prega la vostra amica vera,

Mary Shelley

Mary Cowden Clarke, Vincent Novello's daughter, records her memories of Mary Shelley in Charles and Mary Cowden Clarke, *Recollections of Writers* (London, Sampson, Low, 1878), 41-42.

<sup>2</sup> Ingpen says that Mr. Slater's school is now (1917) the Church House to the Carmelite Church (*Shelley in England*, 599).

difficulty in making the present arrangement. At the same time present my acknowledgements for his kindness to Percy, and for the provision with which he is good enough to supply me.

I am, dr. Sir,  
Your Obt. Servt.  
Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT:  
Copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

302. *To William Whitton\**

51 George St., Portman Sq.,  
Tuesday, 8 April [1828].

My dear Sir,

Percy went to school, to Mr. Slater at Kensington on the 25th ult. he is now home for the Easter holidays—and is satisfied with his school and is both well and happy. I trust Sir Timothy will be pleased with my attention to his wishes and my selection for him.

A friend of mine has arrived from the south at Paris—and intends immediately almost to proceed to Germany— As I desire very much to profit by this only opportunity I shall have of seeing her—I intend going to Paris the day after I take Percy back to school (next Thursday)—as I shall be exceedingly anxious to return to him, I shall not remain away more than three weeks.<sup>1</sup>—The opportunity is the more desirable as I join other friends who are going.

I will let you know immediately on my return—which will not be protracted beyond the time I have mentioned.

I shall be very glad to hear that Percy will have an opportunity of seeing his Grandfather again.

I am, dear Sir,  
Yr. Obt. Servant,  
Mary Shelley

ENDORSED: 8th April 1828. Mrs. Shelley. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 599 (quot., 9 lines). TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

303. *To [? John Murray]\**

51 George St.  
10 April [1828]

My dear Sir

I return your book with many thanks—and when I return I shall ask you, as you gave me leave, to lend me others— I am now going to Paris for two

<sup>1</sup> Mary's journal for April 11, 1828: "I depart for Paris, sick at heart, yet pining to see my friend (Julia Robinson)."—Marshall, II, 188.

or three weeks— You have not called as you said—nor sent me the book—  
I will let you know where I am when I return, when I shall hope to see you

I am dear Sir

Yr. Obt. Svt

Mary Shelley

ORIGINAL: Not traced. Owned by Maggs Brothers in July, 1937; A.L.S., 1 p.  
8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

### 304. *To [Prosper Mérimée]*<sup>1</sup>

[Paris] Saturday evening [? May 31, 1828]

It is because I am not a coquette that I return your letter. I should not like to keep the expression of sentiments which you will probably repent of later—nor the evidence of what you will regard (it may be) upon reflection as a weakness.

You ask for my friendship—It is yours. Always I shall be your friend, if always you desire it—if always (pardon this woman's way of speaking, not petty but proud) you should prove yourself worthy. I shall write you— I hope to see you again in Paris—in London— Let me share your aspirations, your success, your happiness or if it must be, your unhappiness—you will find in me a friend sympathetic—tender—true.

I leave on Monday. I ought to give tomorrow to my friend as the last of my stay in Paris. I am sorry you cannot spend the whole evening at Madame Garnett's. But I shall see you there and again I shall assure you of my friendship.

Saturday evening

[Unsigned]

ORIGINAL: Requien Collection (No. 9243), Bibliothèque et Musée Calvet d'Avignon. (Original letter is in French.) PRINTED: (French text only) Dennis M. Healy, "Mary Shelley and Prosper Mérimée," *Modern Language Review*, XXXVI, No. 3 (July, 1941), 396. TEXT: Translation of French text published by Healy, as above.

### 305. *To Jane Williams Hogg*

[Dover, June, 1828]

... my physician told me that sea-bathing will diminish by at least a month the period of my ugliness—you would not know me.

<sup>1</sup> The French text of the original letter reads:

C'est parceque je ne suis pas coquette que je vous rends votre lettre. Je ne voudrais pas garder l'expression des sentiments dont vous pourriez vous repentir apres—ni le temoignage de ce que vous paraitra (il se peut) en reflechissant, une faiblesse.

Vous demandez mon amitié— Elle est à vous. Toujours je serai votre amie, si toujours vous le desirez—si toujours (pardonnez ce façon de parler à une femme, non pas coquette mais fière) vous vous en monteriez digne. Je vous ecrirai—J'espere vous revoir à Paris—à Londres— Faites moi part de vos esperances, vos succes, votre bonheur ou si cela doit etre, de vos malheurs—vous trouverez en moi une amie simpatisante—compatisante—vrai.

Je pars lundi. Je dois donner demain à mon amie comme le dernier de mon sejour à Paris. Je suis fâchée que vous ne pourriez rester toute la soirée chez Mme Garnett. Mais je vous y verrai et encore je vous assurerai de mon amitié.

*Samedi soir*

Prosper Mérimée (1803–70) may have proposed marriage, though it is not necessary to think so. Also relating to Mérimée are Letters 308, 309, and 311.

ORIGINAL: Lord Abinger. PRINTED: Grylls, *Mary Shelley*, 213 (quot., 2 lines).  
TEXT: Quoted from Grylls, *Mary Shelley*.

306. *To William Whitton\**

Dover,  
June 4, 1828.

Dear Sir,

I was unfortunately delayed in Paris by illness— I took with me the small pox and was laid up immediately on my arrival there. I am ordered sea bathing for my perfect recovery—and as Percy is always recommended the sea side I intend to stay with some friends on this coast till after his holidays.

I shall remain at Dover a week and shall be much obliged to you if you will let me hear from you here. I heard with great pleasure that Sir Timothy called at Kensington to see Percy— I hope he was satisfied with the school and with my boy— I shall always be happy, and I have shewn this, to attend to any suggestion of his concerning them. The question of the encrease of my allowance was left in doubt last March—when indeed I indulged the hope of reaping the benefit of it. I hope it is now decided in my favour.

I am, dear Sir,  
Yr. Obt. Servant,  
Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: W. Whitton Esq.,/ 3 Kings Road, Bedford Row,/ London. ORIGINAL:  
Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made  
by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

307. *To William Whitton*

[Dover] 6 June, 1828.

My dear Sir,

I return the receipt as you ask. I confess I am disappointed at the amount of my cheque— I do not wish to make any claim on Sir Timothy, but in sending Percy to school I counted on an encrease of my allowance as the means of paying in part for his schooling— As he grows older and now that he is away from me, his expences encrease rapidly, and I shall find myself I fear much embarrassed if Sir Timothy is not good enough to take these circumstances into consideration. As Sir Timothy is now in town may I request you to represent to him from me respectfully my hope that I might this quarter have begun to receive an addition. You may remember that when you spoke to me in the spring of 1827 on this subject, you said, that the first idea had then been to make the allowance 300£ p. ann., but that Sir Timothy had said, that as in another year my son's expences would augment, it would be more prudent to defer till then the proposed encrease.

In all this I beg to deprecate any idea of making a claim on Sir Timothy; I am grateful to him for his kindness to my son, and it would greatly pain me if he thought me intrusive— But I find the greatest difficulty in keeping

from embarrassment—and to meet the expences of the school bills will be almost impossible if I now receive no more than I did before this addition to my disbursements.

I am, dear Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
Mary Shelley

ADDRESS: W. Whitton Esq./ 18 Bedford Row,/ London. ENDORSED: 6th June 1828. Mrs. Shelley. ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

### 308. *To Sir John Bowring\**

Dover—11 June [1828]

My dear Sir

When I last wrote I little foresaw all the annoyances that were to overthrow my plans. I took with me to France the small pox, which confined me immediately on my arrival, and destroyed every arrangement both of pleasure and business.

Is it now too late to write the critique I promised? if not I will set about it instantly.—I have also a request to make you. You know and I believe think well of the two works the “Comedies of Clara Gazul” & the “Guzla”—Mérimée, the author of these, is now bringing out another publication, which he will send me as soon as it is printed—I expect it daily—if I write an article on his works, will it prove acceptable to the W[estminster] R[evue]?—I should like very much so to do.<sup>1</sup>

What about L[ord] B[yron]’s letters for Moore? Those you gave me are safely locked up in town— I do not intend to return to London for some time, as sea bathing is recommended to me for my perfect recovery— Would you send me the letters directed to J. Robinson Esq Park Cottage, Paddington—where they would be forwarded immediately to me—and I would return them to you as soon as copied—or will you send them immediately to Moore 19 Bury St. St. James’—the first arrangement would please me best—

Tell me how you are & what doing— I heard some very agreeable intelligence concerning you in Paris—and shall be glad to be able to congratulate you upon it

I am Most sincerely yours  
Mary Shelley

<sup>1</sup> Prosper Mérimée’s *Clara Gazul* (1825) and *La Guzla* (1827) were followed by *La Jacquerie* (1828). Mary’s article appeared in the *Westminster Review*, No. XIX (January, 1829), 71–81, as a review of the last two of Mérimée’s works, but it treats all three of them. The article is competent and readable, though in no way distinctive in style or ideas. For it she received £55. (See Letter No. 326.)

D. M. Healy writes in “Mary Shelley and Prosper Mérimée,” *Modern Language Review*, No. XXXVI (July, 1941), 395: “In 1829, Mérimée sent a copy of *La Guzla* to his English friend, Sutton Sharpe, with instructions that it be delivered personally to Mary Shelley (cf. *Mercur de France*, 1<sup>er</sup> avril, 1912, p. 490). Gustave Planche maintains, in his *Portraits Littéraires* (2 vols., Paris, 1853, I, 208), that ‘Plusieurs pièces de *La Guzla* ont été versifiées par Madame Shelley, presque sans altération.’ I have attempted to find these translations, but without success.”

ADDRESSED: John Bowring Esq/ J. Bentham Esq/ 2 Queen's Square Place/ Westminster/ London. POSTMARKS: (1) DOVER/ 11 JU 11/ 1828/72 (2) A/ 12 JU 12/ 1828. ENDORSED: Dover 11 June 1828/ Mary Shelley. ORIGINAL: Huntington Library (HM 2759); A.L.S., 2 pp. 4to. This letter and 11 others to Bowring are mounted, with transcripts, an introduction and title-page, in a 4to volume bound in morocco and gilt edged, by Sangorski. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: From original letter.

309. *To Isabel Booth\**

Dover,  
15 June [1828]

My dear Girl,

You will have heard from Mrs. Godwin of my hateful illness and its odious results. Instead of returning to town as I most exceedingly desired—to join my friends there, and to see again my dear Isabel—I am fain to hide myself in the country, and as I am told sea bathing will assist materially the disappearance of the marks I remain on the coast.

I shall long to see you again—to relate and to hear a thousand histories—if I make a longer stay in the country than I now intend perhaps you will join me—but I mean now to return with Percy at the end of his holidays, that is at the end of July.

I was sickening of my illness when I left town—my journey was so painful that I shudder at the recollection and I arrived only to go to bed.<sup>1</sup> What will you say to my philosophy when at the end of three weeks, in brilliant health but as ugly as the —— I went into society— I was well repaid for my fortitude, for I am delighted with the people I saw—and some I love and they merit my affection— What will you say also to the imagination of one of the cleverest men in France [Prosper Mérimée], young and a poet, who could be interested in me in spite of the marks I wore. It was rather droll to play the part of an ugly person for the first time in my life, yet it was very amusing to be told—or rather not to be told but to find that my face was not all my fortune.

I have excellent news of my darling boy whom I long to see again— I hope you are well. Mrs. G. mentioned in her last letter that your children had called there and that all seemed well with you. When I last saw you, dear friend, I very little anticipated this long separation—not at all did I fear that I should avoid London on my return from Paris—instead of seeking it as I intended as speedily as possible— Patience! My malady has made me lose a year of my life—but in spite of the marks that still remain (I am in no danger of permanent disfigurement) I am in good health—and so different from my dreary state all last winter—and looking younger than when you saw me last.

Write to me, dearest, and direct to me at J[oshua] Robinson Esq.—Park Cottage, Paddington<sup>2</sup>—and your letter will be forwarded— Early next week I go to Hastings.

<sup>1</sup> Mary's journal for July 8 adds: "The nature of my disorder was concealed from me till my convalescence, and I was easily duped."—Marshall, II, 188.

<sup>2</sup> The first reference in Mary's correspondence to the Robinsons (a family with which for



My love to Isabel and Kate and remembrances to Mr. Booth.

Affectionately my Isabels

M. S.

[P.S.] Have the goodness, love, to put the enclosed in the *twopenny post* for me.

ORIGINAL: Sir John Shelley-Rolls. PRINTED: Ingpen, *Shelley in England*, 601–602. TEXT: From copy made by Sir John Shelley-Rolls.

### 310. To Thomas Campbell

Dover,

June 22, 1828

I enclose one or two articles, and some verses the production of a gentleman now abroad who wishes to contribute to the *New Monthly*.<sup>3</sup>

ORIGINAL: Owned in 1937 by Walter T. Spencer, London; A.L.S., 1½ pp. 8vo. UNPRINTED and UNPUBLISHED. TEXT: Quotation sent me by Walter T. Spencer, who would not permit me to copy the letter.

### 311. To [Victor Jacquemont]<sup>1</sup>

Hastings June 27 [1828]

Dear Sir,

I am causing you a great deal of trouble, I am very sorry for it. Unseal the letter of Mrs. Douglas which contains an article [*objet*]<sup>2</sup>—do the same with the letter to Prosper. If you are able to pass them as plain letters without breaking the seal I shall be delighted—if not—it will be necessary to submit to the stupid regulations—break them and seal again before delivering them. I carried successfully several letters in my boxes, sealed to France, there were even some thick ones, which contained pamphlets and these were permitted to pass without examination—they do not inspect boxes, especially from England.

some years she was quite intimate, often staying for considerable periods at their house, Park Cottage) is to Isabel Robinson (Mrs. Sholto Douglas) in her letter of September 25 [1827]. Mary eventually fell out with them. The family consisted of Joshua Robinson and his five or more children: "Julian, who was at Cambridge with Percy Florence Shelley; Julia (married and went abroad); Isabella, afterwards Mrs. Sholto Douglas . . . ; Rosa," who became Aubrey William Beauclerc's second wife; and George.—Grylls, *Mary Shelley*, 208. Mary wrote many letters to these friends, but not one has been published. Charles Robinson (see Letter 677) was probably related to the Robinson family. (See Letter 535.)

<sup>3</sup> The gentleman was probably David Lyndsay.

<sup>1</sup> According to Healy, Jacquemont was in London preparing for a journey to India. The French text of the original letter reads:

Hastings ce 27 juin [1828]

Monsieur,

Je vous donne beaucoup de la peine, j'en suis très fâchée. Décachez la lettre de Mme Douglas qui contient un objet—faites le même de la lettre de Prosper. Si vous pouviez faire passer les simples lettres sans couper les sceaux j'en serai charmée—sinon—il faut se soumettre aux stupides règles—coupez les et cachez avant de les remettre. Je portai bien des lettres même en mes mâles, cachetées à la France, il y avait mêmes des grosses, qui contenaient des brochures et on les permettait à passer sans mot—on ne visite pas les mâles surtout d'Angleterre.

Je reçois à l'instant une lettre de Mérimée qui demande réponse veuillez vous charger encore de celle-ci. Son livre arriva hier. Je ne fais que le commencer.

Adieu dear Sir—encore bon voyage—encore portez vous bien. Retournez sauf à vos amis. Saluez les miens à Paris.

M. S.

I have just this moment received a letter from Mérimée which requires an answer—will you take charge of that one also. His book [*La Jacquerie*] has arrived here. I have only begun reading it.

Adieu dear Sir—again bon voyage—again take care of yourself. Return safely to your friends. Salute my friends at Paris.

M. S

ORIGINAL: Archives of the Jacquemont family. (Original letter is in French.)  
PRINTED: (French text only) Dennis M. Healy, "Mary Shelley and Prosper Mérimée," *Modern Language Review*, XXXVI, No. 3 (July, 1941), 395. Healy prints from a copy given him by M. Maurice Parturier. TEXT: Translation of French text published by Healy, as above.

*The Letters of Mary W. Shelley*

COLLECTED AND EDITED BY FREDERICK L. JONES

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